# PARALLEL WORLDS

Matti Tainio

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## Art and Sport in Contemporary Culture

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# Warming Up

Art and sport are inseparable parts of contemporary culture. There is no way to escape their presence. Even if one is not interested in them they are present, not necessarily directly but implicitly, as tendencies in visual culture or sport-related idioms in everyday parlance. If one is an art enthusiast or a sport fan, they can form the substance of life. A real addict can even adapt other components of her life according to the important events in art or sport. Even though the same person can be enthusiastic about art and sport, an affinity between the practices themselves is seldom expected. Much more often, they are seen as adversaries. In everyday situations , art is identified as something distant and strange, elitist, even difficult, and sport as vulgar, pedestrian and popular. The similar character of the practices as producers of first-rate experiences is hidden by the apparent differences in their status and content. Common perspectives on art and sport are generally simplified, which conceal their various connotations.

My interest in art and sport arises from both the artist's and athlete's point of view. I am an artist and I have a life-long interest in visual arts. I have never been a sports fan, but sport has been part of my life through the various sports I have been engaged in. My practical everyday activities with art and sport were the first catalysts for the idea of combining art and sport in the same context. Both artist and athlete are at the center of these practices; they are the prime movers. While their objectives are different, the personal reasons for engaging in these practices can be a similar quest for experiences. In addition, the structures of the frameworks around the artist and athlete are alike. Both practices form an independent realm within more practical activities in society. There are inherent rules that deviate from everyday understanding; the mechanism of valuing achievements is based on a different rationale than the normal, utilitarian functions of society. And so, the combination of art and sport became tempting. The idea of connecting art and sport first emerged in my artistic work, but later the idea of employing the concept for a research project began to seem viable. If a superficial inspection revealed some similarities between the practices of art and sport, proceeding with a more detailed inquiry should reveal more.

Consequently, my research links art and sport together in an unorthodox manner, viewing them as parallel practices, thus providing the possibility for novel perspectives into them and subsequently attempting to clarify their current meanings and composition. The research deals with the similarities, parallels, and connections between art and sport.

While I have focused on making an inquiry about the connections between art and sport in contemporary culture, the following questions have acted as the guidelines for my research:

**What kind of meanings do art and sport carry, and how have these meanings changed over time?**

**How are art and sport understood today?**

**What kind of connections can be found between art and sport and how have they developed over time?**

**How can the connections between art and sport be explored and presented through artistic work?**

**What kinds of new perspectives on art and sport can be obtained, firstly by clashing the practices together, and secondly by employing artistic methods in sport?**

**How do the disappearing borders between cultural practices, in my case art and sport, affect their future?**

The process of investigating art and sport is carried out on a fairly conceptual level; however, practical examples are used to illuminate the various viewpoints on art and sport as well as the development of their practices throughout time. The conceptual approach helps to identify overall tendencies in the development of art and sport. In addition, its perspective balances two points of view: both art and sport are looked at as systems and through the personal experiences of the participants.

The research combines a humanistic approach in using various written sources as well as artistic methods and a free-form participatory study of hobbyist sport. My approach has been multidisciplinary: I have used philosophical aesthetics, cultural history, and art history, as well as art and sport sociology, to provide perspective on the subject. The assumption has been that this marginal question exploring both art and sport is not a central interest for any single academic discipline, and thus requires approaches from multiple angles in order to be examined properly. Using one highly specific approach can provide an extremely detailed view, but the use of a variety of perspectives produces a mosaic image. While all the details are not revealed, and there are gaps, the general tendencies come into view. Indeed, the variety of connections between art and sport come into view only if they are observed through different disciplines.

The organized structure of art and sport as cultural practices is emphasized through the research: the tendencies within art and sport practices are studied as the systems, universal patterns, structures, and habits of action. The study of systems reveals those patterns that usually are shadowed by individual instances and events. From the chosen perspective, art can be seen as a practice producing certain types of artifacts or events using a certain set of techniques, to be enjoyed according to certain standards, and sport can be seen as a physical activity in a formalized and symbolic setting, producing experiences and measurable achievements that are enjoyed according to different standards from art.

The written research forms a narrative of my search for various ways to connect art and sport and analyzes the character of the connections and their changes over the course of time. In addition, in order to demonstrate my specific perspectives on art and sport, I have used my text to openly reveal the reasoning behind the arguments made and viewpoints taken.

In addition to the academic study, my artistic work forms a part of the research, and provides an insider's point of view on contemporary art practices. My choice was to undertake three artistic projects as part of the research. The results of the projects were presented in exhibitions in 2008 (Galleria Pirkko-Liisa Topelius), 2010 (Galleri Sinne) and 2012 (Sports Museum of Finland). The artistic work has emphasized personal experience as a part of the research. It does not make the study fully subjective, but does illuminate my personal path of thoughts.

Furthermore, I use my personal sport practice – hobbyist distance running – to provide a participant's view of sport. My running practice has produced insights about contemporary physical cultures for the study, in addition to being employed in my artistic projects. Even though my running practice has not been an official part of the research, I have considered it as its third element.

Unlike in the academic work, where the result is a written research report, I do not have a fixed set of tools for my art. I chose the working methods that interested me at the time, and which provided the best possibility to produce a work of art that created an experience allowing the perceiver to follow the path formed by my thoughts. The resulting works are often somewhat

autobiographical – not in a narrative sense, but the work frequently relies on my personal experiences and remarks. Much of my work is performative in nature; I like to set myself a task and use the documentation of it to create the final artwork. The combination of the task and the documentation generates the artistic element of the work.

The art projects conducted as a part of the research illustrate my approach to artistic research quite well – I have been making art for the sake of research. The themes of the projects have a clear relationship to the key aspects of my study. In this way, the results of the projects were not totally independent art, but somewhat subordinate to the object of the research. I now see that the most important aspect of the artistic research was how the different way of thinking required by the art projects modified my total understanding of the research subject. Academic thinking has to be meticulous about the interpretation of the material; one has to be sure that the research is based on verified sources and facts. In artistic work, it is much more acceptable to follow the instinctive paths of thought, to make lighthearted tests with new but tenuous ideas. Those processes do not always produce a finished artwork, and the artwork may even turn out to be unusable in the context of the research. However, in most cases the finished process produces artwork that clearly addresses at least some aspects of the research.

I see these artistic and academic processes as parallel but not totally separate. They never intertwined into one entity, but were constantly pushing and pulling at each other. When the work on either the artistic or academic part altered its direction, it had an influence on the other part. The newly altered direction of one practice then steered the course of the other, and as a consequence changed my conception of it. Both practices generated insights about the direction of my research; both academic and artistic practices produced knowledge about the relations of art and sport.

The finished artworks themselves have a minor importance to my study. More important has been the path I have been travelling when trying to achieve a certain goal, in which I have usually failed somewhat. The artworks can only partially convey those aspects that making them has provided for the research.

The research method was typical for humanistic study: I did not collect a set of particular material for my research. Instead, the research was conducted using a wide range of existing material, including books and articles, autobiographical texts and fiction, blogs and newspapers, as well as various visual sources and artworks. The compilation of this material provided new perspectives on the various aspects of art and sport, and brought their current inclinations into focus. Using this extensive body of material, I attempted to extract a very specific view of the contemporary situation in art and sport: to see them as practices on the move, practices that are distancing themselves from many of the ideas they have been connected with since the emergence of their modern forms and discovering novel connections between them.

The changes taking place in art and sport are usually slight shifts in general tendencies, that barely move the point of balance within the whole practice; but they can also emerge as small radical movements that steer the whole practice in a new direction. The first type of change is visible in the long-term transformation of large institutions, for instance the Olympic Games and the art presented in world-class museums. The latter type of change can be seen in the emergence of snowboarding and the transformation of the concept of art during the 1960s. As a result of this journey through different views on art and sport, I ended up with a reasoned proposition that shows why art and sport can today be seen as similar practices, and why this perspective is beneficial.

Even though studying the vague relationships between art and sport may seem irrelevant, there are good, if not obvious, reasons to take a look at these two disparate practices and treat them as similar: art and sport have a vital role in today's everyday culture. They both stimulate feelings and create content in people's lives. However, the imprecise conception of them, especially in their contemporary condition, causes prejudices and resistance against both art and sport. Finding fresh perspectives on them can help in understanding their importance and seeing their influence on and benefits for society. A better understanding of the affinities between art and sport could advance the conscious search for novel applications, where combinations of art and sport could benefit well-being. New perspectives on art and sport will make visible the advantages of art and artistic work outside their traditional frames, as well as expanding the understanding about the various meanings of sport and other physical cultures today.

While the study of art and sport and their relationship is the core subject of the research, the general development of the modern western culture and its contemporary condition forms an

important undercurrent. Art and sport are fundamentally modern practices and their formation is deeply linked with the general differentiation of cultural practices that took place during the development of modern European culture. The close study about the development and contents of art and sport shows how substantial is the difference between the preceding conception of culture and the modern one and how the modern culture has transformed while approaching present moment.

My view of art and sport is tinted by the Finnish perspective, which is especially visible when nationalism in sport is discussed. However, I have attempted to maintain views that emphasize a universal conception of art and sport. Also, despite the seemingly neutral tone, male practices in sport are highlighted in the research. Even though the specific view of female sports as well as gender issues in sport in general are important subjects, I had to omit a closer study of them from this research for the various reasons. The central reason for this is the relatively late inclusion of women in sport: many of the physical activities popular among women in the early twentieth century (gymnastics, dance) were not considered to be "real sports." In consequence, male sport manifests more clearly the practice of modern sport in the context of my research.

Moreover, a certain difference exists in the manner in which art and sport are dealt within the study. Art practice is discussed (almost) solely from the viewpoint of professional art, while the discussion of sport is polarized into competitive, both professional and amateur variety, as well as purely hobbyist perspectives on the practice. There are two reasons for this unbalanced setting. Firstly, because I have used my own experiences to obtain understanding, the only perspectives available were those of a professional artist and a hobbyist and non-competitive athlete. Secondly, both competitive and hobbyist sport have contributed to the development of sport, while amateur art has been important for the development of art only when presented in a professional context. However, the influence of non-professional activity in art and its boundaries has increased in recent times as a result of changes in the concept of art.

The opening chapter deals with the first art project, and through its progress and results the inception of the research. The artistic work was employed to find starting points for the academic study on art and sport. The project provided me with the opportunity to articulate the still ambiguous framework of the research. The project focuses on contemporary Finnish running culture, and especially hobbyist distance runners, through my own experiences. The idea was to make a deep exploration in one sport in order to advance understanding about contemporary sport in general.

Art and sport have not always existed in a similar manner as today. There have been past activities that remind one of the modern conceptions of art and sport, but there have also been considerable differences. The second chapter deals with different ways of understanding historical practices and their results from a contemporary point of view. Starting with different possible perspectives on art and sport and the significance of the historical context, I then proceed to questions about cultural practices and possible theoretical viewpoints on their historical and conceptual formation.

The third chapter lays the foundation for investigating the parallel existences of art and sport, by exploring the historical development of art and sport from antiquity to the beginning of the twentieth century, thus revealing the similarity of the circumstances and time frame of the emergence of their modern forms.

Guided by the ideas of Larry Shiner and Allen Guttmann, I divide the development of the cultural practices of art and sport into the stages preceding their modern systems and those following that change. Before the emergence of the modern systems of art and sport in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many of the individual actions that are today conceived of as art and sport existed, but the categories of art and sport did not. Before the modern ideas of art and sport existed, most of the auxiliary activities, practices, and institutions that today are part of the wider fields of art and sport did not exist either: the artist and athlete, art museums and exhibitions, sporting fields and regular events, and public criticism and press have mostly emerged during the last two hundred and fifty years. After the emergence of art and sport I then follow their further development into the early twentieth century. This historical perspective on art and sport brings forth the temporal dimension of their progress: the development of art and sport did not terminate at the formation of the practices. However, their early forms still shape our conception of them, even though both practices have changed considerably. The conception of art and sport as historically developed cultural practices forms

the starting point for the further study of their relationship.

In chapter four we return to the artistic projects: the second project, *Kaksi – Två,* reflects issues dealt with in the previous chapter. The historical account of the rather recent emergence of art and sport, which had a clear connection with the general modernization and segmentation of European culture, lead me to think about the imaginary field connecting the practices of art and sport. I investigated this hypothetical field and attempted to build a continuum between the practices by documenting different artistic and athletic acts on videos, that were then combined into an interactive installation. Through this work, I also pursued an understanding of the current changes in the two practices. Although the modern conceptions of art and sport are still the dominant ones, a closer look reveals that the conceptualization of art and sport has grown more wide-ranging. The old ideals do not confine contemporary activities, which may seek novel experiences despite the previous boundaries.

The fifth chapter takes a slight sidestep, and examines the social structures within the contemporary systems of art and sport. Both practices form a web of relations where the artist and athlete play the leading role, but are still dependent on the assistance of and co-operation with other actors within their practices. Many aspects of the relationships are similar, but there are also major differences. The roles of the active participants, supporting professionals, as well as the audiences are dealt with. Special consideration is given to research that attempts to study art and sport from the artist's and athlete's perspectives.

Chapter six explores the aesthetic links between art and sport. The recent transition from modern to postmodern has altered the prevailing balance within culture. The previous ideals employed in art and sport are losing their grip, and new models are replacing them. Today, aesthetics does not only deal with the qualities of art, but a wider range of issues from environment to the everyday experience, and even the foundations of our contact with the world. Various studies suggest that aesthetics play a significant role in forming new ways of operating in the world. A study of recent developments in aesthetics and its contemporary state forms the groundwork for a detailed exploration of the special questions of aesthetics in sport, as well as the distinctive aesthetic experience of the active participants in art and sport. The recent development of the field of aesthetics of sport is dealt with, as well as developments in understanding the aesthetic links between art and sport.

The seventh chapter deals with the concept of artification. This recently introduced term indicates situations where something traditionally not regarded as art becomes art or art-like: the concept of artification implies the use of artistic and creative methods in alternative ways to the benefit of practices outside the category of art. Artification can be unconscious, part of current cultural tendencies, or the concept can be applied purposefully. In this research, an analysis of the possibilities for artification is employed in order to expose new kinds of activities in sport. The general features and conditions of artification are explored, and the possibilities for the artification of sport are investigated on a general level as well as through two specific case studies.

Chapter eight presents the third and last art project, *Mitä ajattelen, kun ajattelen juoksemista / What I think about when I think about running.* The project deals for the second time with contemporary running. The objective of the art project was to pursue the development which had taken place during the earlier research.

While the two first projects were exhibited in well-established galleries, this time the results of the project were presented in the Sport Museum of Finland. The exhibition obtained new connotations from the venue. My views about hobbyist contemporary running became inadvertently compared with the Sport Museum's permanent collection in the next room, and appeared to be a commentary on the competitive side of the sport.

The ninth chapter explores the different manifestations of sport in contemporary art. Sport has been the subject of art since the beginning of that practice, but over the last decades the use of sport in art has become more multifaceted: its use in art extends beyond images – sport is used in art in various ways and for various reasons. Sport is no longer just a visually interesting subject of art: it is used to criticize the sportworld; sport is transformed – even ridiculed – for art; artists' have invented new sports; sport has been incorporated into art for reasons that address topics outside art and sport; and finally sport has been turned into a medium for the making of art. Contemporary art can use various fields of culture, including sport, for promoting its own ends. Artworks can provide views contrasting to the customary perception of sport.

Chapter ten compiles the explorations made in the previous chapters, and presents a view of the current relations between art and sport. The contemporary fragmentation of the fields of art and

sport becomes obvious, and today the coherent and well-defined practices of art and sport that prevailed for most of the twentieth century no longer exist; instead, there are multiple variations of the practices that are connected through a complex network. Today's situation suggests developing a new, less restricted view on these practices.

The old ideals of art and sport have disintegrated into a postmodern plurality, where all kinds of combinations between previously separate practices are possible. Not all the presented practices are obviously related to art or sport. However, they combine the artistic and aesthetic aspects of art and the physicality of sport in a novel way that often values making things together rather than competing. The previous concentration on achievement in sport and physical objects in art has been transformed by modern practices into an emphasis on experiences and processes. Instead of being merely a member of the audience, today's culture emphasizes participation as the expressive order: the voluntary engagement with processes that produce aesthetic experiences connects today's artistic and physical practices in the production of cultural distinction. The landscapes of art and sport are still changing. In the current culture, the most interesting developments in art and sport take place outside their traditional frames. Both practices are attempting to adapt to this new situation, but it is doubtful whether art and sport can hold their former positions when their borders are fraying.



# 1 • On the Run – Running as the Subject of Art & the Means of Making Art



1/10000 of Marathon




*Memorial Flagging*



*Memories*



*Running Analysis 1-4 (detail)*



*Runners (stills from the video)*




*Attempt to run Helsinki*





# The Preparatory Process

At the outset of the first art project, my understanding about the direction of my research as a whole was elementary. I did have ideas about the relationship between art and sport, but no clear indication about the point of view I should take in my exploration, or how I should delimit the subject of the research. Art and sport both seemed like vast and tangled web of concepts, that felt almost impossible to sort out. I had not yet found a starting point that would take me further from these general thoughts. Treating art and sport as general concepts was difficult; any argument I tried to make seemed easy to refute by using a simple detailed example found in art or sport trivia. Clearly, I needed some concrete examples that would connect my arguments to the fabric of real life. In addition, I needed to narrow the scope of my research from sport and art generally to some limited elements within them in order to be able to construct solid argumentation. Since the academic work alone did not seem to bring a feasible solution to my unclear ideas about art and sport, I thought that advancing the first art project could provide a key for identifying the core questions I was looking for.

If the first art project was about to serve as the inception of my research, the foremost question I had to find an answer to was: How should art and sport be combined advantageously in the context of art? I needed to find a working method that would be fruitful for the subsequent academic research. Fortunately, I did not have to start from scratch: in a previous project, I had sought the means to convert an athlete's experiences into artworks.[1] At that time I used a few different sports to probe the question about experience in sport, an approach that produced some general understanding about those sports, but from a limited perspective. I decided to continue developing this approach, but this time concentrating on one sport and trying to find several angles from which to explore it. In the earlier project, I employed sports that I had personal experience with, and I wished to continue that approach. I had taken up distance running a few years before, and I decided to employ my training regime to take a closer look at the contemporary running culture in Finland. The central reason for choosing running as a subject for the art project was my previous running experience, combined with my interest in trying a more serious approach to distance running. Further reasons for selecting distance running were the fundamental

1 See: http://www.mattitainio.net/harjoituksiagalleria.htm.

role of running in the successes of early twentieth century Finnish sport, as well as the contemporary significance of distance running in recreational sport culture. At the time, running was an important form of everyday exercise, and interest in running as exercise was definitely rising.

At the beginning of the art project, I was by no means a serious runner. Before the project began, I had run in a leisurely manner for a couple of years but did not follow any training program: my running was occasional and the distances moderate. When I began to plan the first art project and decided to use my running habit as background material for the artistic work, I also realized that my running needed to be developed into a regular and target oriented practice. Carrying on running in my previous style would not get me anywhere. Firstly, I set goals to motivate my exercises and achieve a deeper knowledge about distance running. At the outset of the art project, in early autumn 2006, I decided that the main goal would be accomplishing my first marathon sometime in 2007. Even though the marathon would be a race, it is also an organized run, where I would compete against myself, not against other participants.

Why was marathon the most suitable goal for the project at hand? The contemporary marathon appeared to me as the apex of today's recreational running culture. The heritage of modern marathon begins with the emergence of the modern Olympic Games in the late nineteenth century, but the marathon as an everyman endurance test has a much shorter history. It became the benchmark in today's hobbyist running in the 1980s, when city marathons proliferated at a rapid pace.[2] Today, the marathon dominates recreational running parlance; discussions about running routinely turn to questions about marathons: Have you run a marathon? How many marathons have you done? What is your personal best? And so on. Even though the marathon is used to differentiate runners, it is also a communal experience. There is no other standardized running event where one can belong to such a mass of enthusiasts. The most popular marathons have multiplied their number of the participants during the last decades, and today many races even have to limit the amount of runners. While a runner's training is a mostly solitary activity, the contemporary marathon is a celebration of the joy of running.

After all, was there any other possibility except running a marathon when my goal was to embark on an artistic project providing an understanding about today's running culture? In addition to broadening my understanding of the cultural dimensions of running, participating in a marathon would further the project by giving me a solid foundation of personal experiences in distance running.

In the Spring of 2007, I signed up for a local *Paavo Nurmi Marathon* that took place in late June. There is not much to say about the race; the main point was that I completed my first marathon. I think my race was a quite typical first marathon: I was able to run the whole route, but without previous experience I did not have a proper understanding about the right pace I should follow. The first half of the race was quite easy. It felt similar to the preceding 20 kilometer training runs, except for the amount of runners and the crowd lining the streets. Drawing closer to the end, my feet let me down. I could run, but my feet hurt so much that I was constantly slowing down. After the race, I noticed that I had lost two of my toenails because my running shoes were too tight. My time, slightly over four hours, deserves no special mention, but I arrived at the finish line with some style – I finished the race side by side with the winner of the men's 70-years old class.

Training through the winter and participation in the marathon formed the groundwork for the exhibition. At the same time as I intensified my running training, I had started to develop the means for connecting running and artistic work in an organized manner that would help me to produce the works for the exhibition. I avoided thinking about the actual artworks, but attempted to form concepts that could be used as the foundations for the artworks. My central objective was to take a closer look at contemporary running through a collection of artworks, but just presenting images about running never felt like it was enough. I explored ways to fuse both running as the subject of the project and the artistic working methods more closely together, to make running an integral part of my artistic work. Running should become both the subject of art and also be used as a means of making art. As a result of these considerations, the outline for the project was clarified further; the works should deal with contemporary Finnish running culture, but they should be constructed in an appropriate way to present the practice of running, not the image of running. Somehow, the artworks should bring the real runners into the gallery; in addition, the action of running should be present in the exhibition.

# The Art Project

Because I did not have an established medium for constructing my artworks at the time, I chose the most promising methods and materials for creating the experience I wanted. In this project, I wanted the perceiver to be able to reflect on my thoughts about various aspects of distance running, the chosen theme of the exhibition. Moreover, my current interests in certain working methods and materials had an effect on the artistic work. At the time, I was interested in the combination of sculptural work and interactive installations. I had an idea about designing my exhibition so it would seem to be composed of individual works, but they would also form a united whole. The objective was to make the individual works in the exhibition form an installation. This is a slightly paradoxical approach, but I still see it as the ideal behind my exhibitions so far.

Another aspect of my artistic work

2 Berking and Neckel 1993, 68-69. Vettenniemi 1999, 43,45.

affected the artworks I presented in the exhibition. I prefer to plan my works thoroughly before executing the final version. I write and draw drafts about the idea; I draw detailed blueprints and sometimes make models of my works. Planning an artwork can take several months, sometimes even more, and the final version is accomplished in a much shorter period of time. In addition, many of my works are impossible to finish outside the exhibition space – I can merely test a working model or individual parts of the work and the final installation is realized for the exhibition only. The central reason for employing this working method can be derived from my understanding of art – for me, art is not about making objects, but about providing possibilities for special experiences. For me, the best way to generate these special experiences is to assemble my work(s) as a site-specific installation, which is usually compiled of several semi-independent works, which could be exhibited separately, but convey their ideas best when displayed as an installation. This working method affects my understanding about the physical artworks: outside the exhibition space, most of my works are no works of art at all. In my mind, they are just regular materials that can be assembled into a work of art. At the time of the first exhibition, I was concentrating on the themes of Finnish art and sport. During the later stages of the research, I decided that an international perspective would provide better results. The idea about the Finnish context is visible in the results of the first art project, but not in the process.

# The First Exhibition

The actual work with the art project began in the early Autumn of 2007, and its results were presented as an exhibition in the gallery Pirkko-Liisa Topelius in Helsinki in the Spring of 2008.

The gallery was a bare white room with a tiled floor and wall-sized windows opening onto the street. I had chosen the gallery before I had a clear idea about the coming exhibition, but the minimalistic space was suitable for many kinds of projects.

The artworks realized for the exhibition orbit the contemporary obsession with marathons by Finnish recreational runners, presenting the subject from different perspectives. The exhibition consisted of six works: three of them were directly connected to my marathon experiences, two works opened a view to Finnish runners and their running community, and the last one connected contemporary art with the history of Finnish distance running. All three categories were somewhat overlapping; I am a Finnish runner, and my ideas about running have been affected by the lost Finnish running glory as well the relationship between other Finnish runners and their running.



# Artworks

## *1/10000 of Marathon*

This artwork adopted its idea from the historical standard of a meter, which consisted of a metal bar made of an alloy of platinum and iridium.[3] The current definition of a meter is defined in terms of the speed of light, which is not easy to visualize. Marathon routes are measured with extreme accuracy, similar to the standard of the meter, and the marathon forms a standard in contemporary running. Thinking about the relation of these two standards and the process of measuring a marathon produced an idea of visualizing the ultimate standard for the marathon. The exhibited artwork presenting a standard for the marathon is one ten-thousandth part of the marathon. Although 1/10 000 of a marathon is a slightly awkward figure, the 421.7 cm long model was the longest exact fraction of a marathon that could fit inside the gallery. To give the work a more concrete and everyday appearance, I borrowed its form from a mundane Stanley tape measure. This wooden fraction of a marathon was set lying on three trestles, mimicking the original setup for the standard meter.

3 Bureau International des Poids et Mesures 1889.

## *Memorial Flagging*

Because of an unfortunate choice of running shoes, I lost two of my toenails soon after my first marathon race. It is not a rare incident, but by choosing the right size shoes and tying the laces properly you do not have to suffer from it. I needed a lesson to learn this, but to be on the safe side decided to make a memorial for the lost nails. When the injured nails turned black and fell off some weeks after my race, I photographed them and transferred the images of the detached nails to a piece of fabric. The fabric was used to make a miniature flag for an eternal memorial to the lost toenails. The flag was kept fluttering with the help of a concealed blower.

## *Memories*

The third work about the marathon experience utilized the photos taken with a disposable camera that I carried throughout the marathon. The Paavo Nurmi Marathon is known for its special route through the distinctive scenery on the island of Ruissalo, where the route runs under the ancient oak trees. There are hardly any oaks in my photographs; instead, there are images of the industrial warehouses by transitional routes through the harbor and the crowd by the streets of central Turku. Most of the images are less than perfect, as they were literally taken on the run, but this was all right for me as I was trying to capture the atmosphere of running with thousands of other runners. A selection of the photographs was

assembled in a long and narrow montage as a timeline of the race.

While the first artworks dealt in a quite straightforward manner with the marathon, the second category of works consisted of two pieces that combined the antique techniques used for moving images with the habitus of contemporary runners. Although the presentation of running in these two works mimics an analytical experiment, my approach is more playful than seriously scientific. The play element in the works is completed by the interaction the works required in order to function. I like to provide a hands-on physical activity in my works, because the necessity to cross the border between the viewer and the art object requires the gallery visitor to explore the exhibition more openly. Remaining a detached viewer is purposefully made difficult in the hope of converting the viewer into an active participant.

## *Running Analysis 1-4*

The objective of Running Analysis to show in detail how every runner has a unique appearance, even though running is seen as a universal and impersonal practice where distinctive style has no place. I had been watching other runners since I started my running practice, and had been amazed by how different styles and postures can produce efficient, or at least fast, running. I captured some runners on video tape. They were filmed in profile, so the differences in their running styles would be visible in a uniform style. From these videos, I selected four runners and converted the video clips to black and white line drawings on a white background. As a result, I had short clips where the cartoonified runner performs one cycle of running steps. The resulting animations were presented in wall-mounted phenakistoscopes: the perceiver looks into a mirror through the slits in the phenakistoscope's disk. When the disk is rotated, the image sequence on the back of the disk is seen as a moving animation in the mirror. When a disk is rotated at a slow pace, the cycle of the runner's step are seen as separate images, and when more speed is given to the disk the images merge into a continuous movement.

## *Runners*

Quite early during the project I developed the idea of making a set of life-sized video portraits of Finnish runners. My initial idea was to shoot some short clips of runners who would represent an "average" runner: there are men and women of all ages practicing distance running as their hobby, and I wanted to capture this diversity.

When depicting people in my previous projects and artworks, I had distanced the subject by presenting the human figure only partially, or as a simplified figure. The people never looked towards the perceiver, but were concentrating on their own affairs. Bringing a person, albeit as a somewhat generalized figure, to the center of the work was a new vantage point for me, and I felt it demanded a new approach. As a solution, I decided to try imaging the runners in three-dimensional video. In 2007, the 3D-film technology was just developing, so my solution was to combine antique 3D-technologies with the more modern video. I achieved the 3D-effect by using the anaglyphic method, whereby the specially prepared image is encoded as three dimensional by using differently colored lenses for each eye. The images merge into a 3D-image when they are viewed through the colored anaglyph glasses, equipped with red and cyan lenses.

The runners portrayed were chosen quite arbitrarily: I set up my equipment along popular running routes and asked the runners passing by to stop for moment and to participate in making the artwork. The method was successful – about half of the passing runners agreed to pose for a portrait. In addition, I asked some local runners I had previously met to join the project.

The finished work consisted of fourteen video-portraits, edited as a continuously looping sequence where the runners one by one materialize into view, take one turn around, and then disappear again. The video was rear-projected on a transparent screen in order to make the runners appear to be present in the same space as the viewer. In addition, placing the projector behind the screen helped to disguise the technological elements of the work. The natural size of the projection made the people watching the work looking at the runners from eye to eye. When looked at through the anaglyphic glasses, the runners appeared like standing in a doorway just outside the room.

## *Attempt to run Helsinki*

The last work, "Attempt to run Helsinki", turned out to be the most important work for me, as it later evolved into an extended series of works.[4] The idea behind the work developed from a legend about Finnish distance runners. In the early twentieth century, from the Stockholm 1912 Olympic Games to the Paris 1924 Olympics, Finnish runners dominated all important distance running events.[5] The belief was that their fame brought Finland into general global awareness, first as a distinct part of the Russian empire and later as an independent nation. It is said that the runners made Finland appear on the map of the world.

My idea was to perform a verbatim run on a map, making a literal interpretation of the Finnish legend. Running Finland on a map would have been too ambitious to attempt, so I decided that running the city of Helsinki on the map would be enough. To achieve the literal result, I placed the word "HELSINKI" on the city map and looked for a layout that enabled running all the letters. When I was satisfied with the design of the route, I made an attempt to run it. I used a GPS-device for recording the attempt. The recorded route was transferred onto a digitized map, which formed a starting point for the final artwork.

In the exhibition, the work was presented as a triptych where the first panel presented the ideal route planned in

4 See also the last art project,"What I Think When I Think About Running".

5 Laine 1992 b, 216.

advance; the second panel the names of the streets along the route; and the third one the route as it came true – with all the mistakes. In addition to the physical artwork, I provided the instructions for running the route independently as well as offering the possibility to run the route with me.

For me, The Attempt to Run Helsinki was the most satisfying of the works in the exhibition, as it contained the physical act of running, but avoided the traditional representations of sport. I was also pleased with the various connotations for Finnish sport history, and contemporary recreational running in general, that were touched upon in the work.

# A Transient Assessment

Working with this art project began to disentangle the difficult concepts of art and sport. At the beginning of the research, my understanding about the direction it should take was vague. My blurred understanding formed the most important reason to carry out the first art project in the early stages of the research. When I could not see the path I should follow in the academic research, I hoped that the artistic work would point the direction. Or, at least, that I would get some results to then continue with the academic research. Before the art project, I had explored the areas of my research without really understanding how to limit the ever expanding domain of the research, and how to identify the aspects of art and sport relevant to my work.

Even though the starting point of the artistic work was not completely analyzed, working with the project and the exhibition broke through some frustrating barriers that had hindered me from advancing the research. Firstly, I found a solution to my problem with defining sport. Sport generally is just too wide and multifaceted a concept, so defining what sport means in the context of my study had been impossible. I was drifting in the midst of all possible sports with their different rules and cultures, and that caused a clear intellectual problem; when talking about sport in general, it is always possible to refute an argument by using an example of single sport that stems from a different historical and cultural understanding of sport. The art project convinced me that it would be fruitful to treat all the necessary aspects of sport mainly through one sport, distance running. Distance running has been a focal part of sports since the beginning of modern sports, and as a practice it has also a preceding history without a reference to sport as we understand it. Moreover, the popularity of recreational running has grown steadily since the early 1970s. Parallel to this growing popularity, running has undergone all the significant transformations that have affected our understanding about sports in general. In my research, distance running represents, at least on a metaphoric level, all sports.

Another aspect of my work that became clearer through the art project was the idea of utilizing the participant's point of view, which would give me a unique perspective on both art and sport. Much of the research about art and sport takes the spectator's point of view. During the project, I found that my interest is inclined to the individual artist's and athlete's experience – what art and sport look like when they are viewed and felt from the active participant's or maker's side. Obtaining an understanding of the insider's view is possible only if one has personal experiences of the practice in question. As an artist, I had experiences of making art, and by utilizing my running habit for the research I would obtain at least a reasonable understanding of today's recreational distance running practice.

At the time, my conceptualization of combining artistic work or projects with academic research was very rudimentary: I would write about art and sport and I would work with projects dealing with the same subject. Basically, there were two parallel operations, the academic and the artistic, without an articulated connection. The written research aimed to provide some comprehension of the questions I would be exploring, and the artistic work aimed to produce other kinds of knowledge: nonverbal, experiential and holistic insight into the subject. Once I had started to work with the first art project, I gradually began to realize the complexity of combining art and academic research. Firstly, I found (the self-evident truth) that the artistic work could not be free, and that the academic work was also not without constrains; when connected by the same questions and executed by the same person, the two practices were dependent on each other. All the academic work done would have an effect on artistic work and vice versa. The relationship is not straightforward, either; it is not easy to isolate the single features that have affected the other practice and discern how they did so. When analyzing the first art project, I ended up with a general conception of the relationship between the dissenting practices; the process between academic and artistic work is like pushing and pulling in different directions, or steering the other practice slightly away from its previous course. This constant wrestling between the two parts of the research was revealed to me during the first art project, and each successive art project continued

to clarify my comprehension of their relationship.

Despite the fact that artistic research is already an established practice, everyone engaging in a research project incorporating artistic elements has to define her own relationship to the existing forms and methods used in it. My perspective on the combination of art, artistic work, and research has been shaped essentially by the Finnish discussion about artistic research and its practical applications in different contexts. In addition, the international discussion about the position of artistic research in the academic world and its methodology has been important in constructing my views. Outside the Finnish context, I have been especially influenced by the discussion about English, American, and Australian schooling systems and artistic work as a part of the doctoral dissertations in their universities. Furthermore, my view is that there has been in two parallel strands of discourse in artistic research. Firstly, there have been the theoretical texts that attempt to outline the ideas, methods, and practices of combining art and research into artistic research, both within an academic setting and outside it, in the practices of individual artists. Secondly, there are the results of artistic research carried out at various universities, usually in the form of doctoral dissertations.

Most of the texts in the first category of discourse originate from the early 2000s; the earliest I have been acquainted with is "Research in Art and Design" by Christopher Frayling[6]. The texts dealing with the Finnish context from early 2000s were quite doubtful about the possibilities of combining art and traditional academic research. However, combining art and some other approach to research was seen as a possibility for artistic practice. These texts include books and articles by Jyrki Siukonen[7], Mika Hannula, Tere Wadén, and Juha Suoranta[8], as well as articles by various authors[9]. In addition, I have to mention various texts and works by Lauri Anttila[10] that have affected my conception of artistic practice as inquiry. The texts dealing with artistic research outside Finland have concentrated both on theorizing the already established practice, and describing various practical approaches. In addition, several articles published in the *Journal of Artistic Research* have contributed to my views on artistic research.

The other strand the discussion has generated is a part of the practical artistic research done in the Finnish art universities. Those doctoral dissertations that have incorporated artistic projects have shown me the practical possibilities of intertwining art and various research traditions. These include finished dissertations from Aalto University's School of Art, Design and Architecture (and its predecessor, the University of Art and Design Helsinki), the Academy of Fine Arts, and various studies I was familiarized with in seminars, conferences, and especially in exhibitions connected to them.[11]

All of these textual and artistic contributions to the theoretical and practical sides of artistic research have assisted me in establishing my conception of combining art and research, even though I have not always agreed with the views presented. Additional instructions for combining artistic projects with my research came from the regulations of Aalto University's School of Art, Design and Architecture concerning dissertations incorporating artistic elements. The regulations state that "a written thesis forming a part of the dissertation has to be in a dialogic and analytic relation to the art productions or product development project, and the doctoral candidate has to present in it the targets, methods and findings of the production, series of productions or product development project."[12] In practice, the regulating effect is mild: the author has to be able to show that the art projects deal with the same questions as the research in general, and employ the results of the artistic work in the written part of the dissertation. The relationship between the written research and the artistic element varies according to the institution where the work is conducted; however, the combination of artistic work and a written report is universal. The method of combining the artistic work and written research varies. The written report can emphasize the questions of the artistic working process, or employ the artistic process or the finished works in addressing issues outside art, or even in analyzing the reception of the artworks.[13]

Some of the texts about artistic research were familiar to me when I started my research, and I read others during the course of my research. At the time of the first artistic project, I had a rudimentary conception of how to integrate artistic projects into the research as a whole. The foundations of these conceptions were later proven to have been adequate, but a more detailed conceptualization of artistic research has, in my case, naturally developed over the life of the project. The idea of incorporating three artistic projects, presented as exhibitions and dealing with different aspects of sport, remained constant, but the balance between the importance of the finished works and the artistic work changed during the course of the research. The artworks grew less important to me, even though they could convey my artistic ideas to the audience, and the process of creating the concepts for the artworks became more important. The actual construction of the artworks

6 Frayling 1993.

7 Siukonen 2002.

8 Hannula, Suoranta and Vadén 2003.

9 For instance in: Kiljunen and Hannula 2001 and Mäkelä and Routarinne 2007.

10 For instance: Anttila1994 and Anttila 2003.

11 Dissertations:
Kantonen 2005, Karhu 2013, Mäkelä 2003, Mäki 2005, Pälviranta 2012, Suonpää 2002, Turpeinen 2005, Weckman 2005, Ziegler 2010.
Conferences:
*The Art of Research: Processes, Results and Contributions*,in University of Art and Design Helsinki, 24.-25.11.2009. *Arts in Society*, in Berlin-Bradenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Berlin 9.-11.5.2011.*Symposion: Artistic Research and Contemporary Art*, in Aalto University Scool of Art and Design 14.-16.3.2011. *Cumulus Helsinki 2012 Conference*, in Aalto University 24.-26.5.2012.

12 Aalto University school of Arts, Design and Architecture. Doctoral Dissertation Instructions 19.9.2012, https://into.aalto.fi/download/attachments/1021782/Aalto_ARTS_Dissertation_Instructions_19092012.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1359464578000&api=v2, accessed 26.4.2014.

13 For instance: Mäkelä 2003, Turpeinen 2005, Pälviranta 2012.

was not important for the study, but the route, the thinking process that began from the academic part of the research and lead to the artworks, contributed most to the research as a whole.

However, discovering how the relationship between artistic and academic work is shaped in my research did not make the finished artworks and their exhibitions irrelevant. On the contrary, the artworks were presented in order to convey the visual results of my thinking processes to the viewers. Naturally, they do not contain everything that has passed in my mind, but the remains of a significant part of it. I hope that the artworks would communicate my ideas about the potential of combining art and sport to the exhibition visitors. Additionally, it is important that the works can be enjoyed outside the research context. This is despite the fact that, in the research context, the finished artworks are subservient to the preceding artistic work; the artworks should be strong enough to be appreciated as contemporary art without a previous knowledge about their research context.

# 2 • Practices, History and the Changing Meanings



My artworks, and the manner in which they were exhibited in an art gallery, belong to the conventional artistic practice of our contemporary culture. In our current society, artworks are made by professional artists and are exhibited in specialized spaces usually open to everyone. People visit these spaces to pay special attention to the artworks, and they discuss them using vocabulary that varies from mundane expressions to specialized jargon. Artists are appreciated for their vision, creativity, and skills. Professional critics evaluate the exhibitions and write reviews for newspapers and magazines. Scholarly books are written about, and academic research carried out on, various aspects of art. In addition to these other specialists, artist themselves take part in the discussion about art. Museums buy artworks for their collections in order to preserve them for later generations, and to exhibit them on various occasions. Private collectors also buy art for their own enjoyment.

Correspondingly, the habit of running long distances, which formed the subject of the first art project, is a normal part of everyday life in early twenty-first century Finland and other affluent countries. People of all ages engage in the running habit and other exercises in their leisure time. Many of them practice several times a week and participate in organized races. Various training guides are sold in bookstores and found on the internet. Ever more efficient training programs are generated based on the latest scientific knowledge. The best distance runners represent their countries in international championships, and the results are reported in newspapers. Sport pages are an essential part of a proper newspaper, and sport results are also reported in conjunction with the television news reports. The approximate length of the marathon is part of general knowledge. A successful athlete can earn her living through sport, and easily becomes at least a national celebrity. The most successful ones are household names around the world. Both art and sport are an inseparable part of our culture and even everyday life, but has it always been like that? The objective of this chapter is to explore the historical formation of art and sport as *cultural practices*.

From today's perspective, both art and sport look like things that have always existed. There are museums full of artworks hundreds of years old; there are cave paintings that show us prehistoric art. Depictions of different sports and games are found in almost every organized culture in the world. Today's Olympic Games are a continuum of the sport contests of the classical Greek culture.

Is it really so, or is this seemingly eternal nature of art and sport only mirroring our contemporary views of the past?

These ambivalent views on the connection between the past and present of art and sport result from contradictory notions about the various human practices that comprise culture. One viewpoint is to see these human practices as eternal concepts that have existed since the beginning of humanity and have been formed as a part of the evolutionary process. Another approach is to see these activities and their meaning in current society as at least partially connected. Even if the concrete activity itself stays similar, its meaning will change dependent on the surrounding society. In this case, any interpretation of the cultural practices as permanent conditions is futile. A simple example can be found in running; it carries different meanings if it is observed as a mundane means for traveling over distances when other transportation is not available, or as a fashionable exercise for those who do their mundane traveling by car.

The evolutionary concept of art has been advocated, for instance, by Ellen Dissanayake and Dennis Dutton.[14] This conception emphasizes the invariable features in art, and denies the effect of the habits and values of the surrounding society on the deep core of art and artistic preferences, emphasizing instead the permanent and stable features of art. According to the evolutionary view, the desire for making art, and an appetite for it, has existed since the dawn of humanity, and there have not been fundamental changes in the foundations of art, even though the surrounding world and society have undergone radical changes. According to this view, the evolutionary basis of art is visible in our aesthetic preferences. At the beginning of his book *The Art Instinct*, Dutton describes the art project *People's Choice* by Russian-born artists Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid. The artists organized nationwide polls in various countries in order to find the most and the least preferred painting in the countries included in the project. The result of the People's Choice project was a series of remarkably similar paintings representing a landscape with trees and open areas, water, human figures, and animals. Dutton connects this similarity of the paintings to the innate aesthetic preferences of human nature, and to the universal roots of the human race in the landscapes of East Africa, where the first hominids appeared.[15] This is the starting point for a more complex elaboration of the theme, but it makes the idea clear: the deepest aesthetic preferences are inherited from the distant past, and the surrounding culture cannot change them.

Another alternative is to look at the historical formation of art from the perspective of the current understanding of art. Jerrold Levinson has taken this path, and looked at *artworks* from today's perspective. Levinson sees art forming a definite narrative: all artworks are dependent on a previous understanding of similar objects and events, and ways of appreciating them. This line of inheritance goes back to the prehistoric age and its *ur-art*. According to Levinson, today's concept of an artwork cannot be anything but historical; its qualities and the habits of its appreciation are built upon all the preceding works of art. However, the historical nature of art does not constrain the advance of future art: an artwork can be consciously made in revolutionary form, seemingly breaking the ties to preceding art, but still with a covert intention to regard the object in a similar manner as artworks have been regarded in the past. Or, the revolutionary artwork can be intended to be regarded in ways that are in contrast with or arrayed against past ways of regarding art, however still in relation to them.[16]

Noël Carroll promotes a similar historical vantage point in defining art, but instead of examining artworks he examines art as a cultural practice: "a complex body of interrelated human activities governed by reasons internal to those forms of activity and to their coordination."[17] According to Carroll, the practice of making, presenting and perceiving special objects (and performances) emphasizes continuity: behind every artwork there is a foundation, a narrative, formed by the tradition: the customs of art practice. In addition to the support of tradition, the practice provides the means for dealing with the inevitable self-transformations and expansions. Instead of acting as confining rules, these means are "rational strategies"[18] that are used to estimate the relation of a new kind of artwork to the preceding tradition. Carroll proposes three main strategies for estimating whether the new object is art or not. They are *repetition*, *amplification,* and *repudiation* of the tradition: a new object can be classified as an artwork if it continues the tradition, intensifies it or rejects it. The first two options are quite straightforward in their relation to the preceding art, but when repudiating the tradition the artwork needs to oppose it in such a manner that is in a logical relation to the past forms of the tradition.[19]

Both Levison's and Carroll's historical views on art deviate from the evolutionary viewpoint by establishing a continuity from the perspective of today's art, instead of explaining our art through preferences developed during evolution. However, there is a major difference between the two historical views: Carroll's concept about art's formation includes a social practice, an artworld, while Levinson's approach denies its relevance. In fact, Levinson openly opposes the idea of the artworld, and states that regarding an object as an artwork depends more on the intention to regard it as an artwork by a person who has the *proprietary rights* to make such an evaluation. Carroll in turn does not especially advocate the idea of the artworld, but implicitly acknowledges its relevance in admitting a new object as a work of art.[20]

The common problem with both approaches in projecting the idea of art backwards in time from the contemporary situation is that they overlook the

14 For instance, Dissanayakae 1992 and Dutton 2009.

15 Dutton 2009, 13-14, 18-19.

16 Levinson 2004 (1979), 36 section III, 40-41 section VI.

17 Carroll 1988, 143.

18 Carroll 1988, 145.

19 Carroll 1988, 144-147.

20 Levinson 2004 (1979), 35,38. Carroll 1988, 149-150.

prevailing conception of art during each historical period by only concentrating on the current reception of the artworks. The approaches are helpful in defining today's art, and are even accepting of the idea of art as a changing practice. However, in emphasizing continuity they do not observe the historicity of the conception of art. When the focus is placed on the specific historical conceptions of those practices that are today classified as art, it is obvious that there exists no universally valid idea about art that forms a narrative, but rather a succession of various practices that include similar practical activities that are present in the art of our time. One has to separate two different lines of thought here: the relationship between artworks executed in different historical (and prehistoric) periods, and the conception of the category of art at different times.[21]

Arthur C. Danto's approach to the development of art combines the essential and historical viewpoints: he sees that there have to be common discernible features in all artworks, and at same time there are historical reasons why some artworks could not have been art in previous times. His conception of history admits that the conception of art has changed over time, and that artworks have developed as well, however art itself has remained unchangeable.[22] The essence of art is not visible to the eye; in order to distinguish a work of art one needs an understanding of artistic theory and knowledge of the history of art. When a person fulfills these conditions, she is able to see the objects or events proposed as artworks as a part of the artworld – and eventually as art. Danto's view is that the artworld is a parallel reality within the regular world, and its existence makes it possible for art to emerge and for artworks to be different from real objects.[23]

Danto's conception of the development of art is significantly affected by the rupture in art practice during the early 1960s, represented especially by the *Brillo Boxes* by Andy Warhol. The plywood boxes in Warhol's work bear a remarkable similarity to the real life cardboard boxes used to pack Brillo pads. The similarity of real life objects and artworks confused Danto, and induced him to generate his philosophy of art in the book *The Transfiguration of Commonplace*. Because artworks and real things cannot be recognized through sight alone, artworks have to have a quality that makes them different. The historical development of art alone cannot answer the question; an artistic theory is required to make the difference. Danto proposes that the central aspect of art is posing the question: what is art - thus always providing new solutions to the problem. The other part of Danto's proposal, the knowledge of the historical development of art, is used to make the question possible.[24]

The problem with Danto's approach is its indifference to specific historical contexts, and his obsession in incorporating contemporary art into the entire narrative of art. The first is visible in his striving for the preservation of the essence of art, despite the transformation of the surrounding culture. The latter is present in the compromise that is made for the development of art: historical development makes it possible to see new kind of objects as art.

Another way to view the development of art is to emphasize the effect of the surrounding society. This view does not see any cultural practices as permanent, but rather as results of the surrounding society. In the case of art, the activities connected to artistic work today, such as painting and sculpture, have remained relatively unaltered as physical acts of creation, and even the results of the practical work (the paintings and sculptures) form a continuum from a distant past. However, their meaning and position in society have undergone many changes. Certainly the historical products of painters and sculptors have an effect on current art, but change in the conception of art is inevitable. There have been radical changes in categorizing art within other cultural practices, as well as the status of artworks and artists. Preben Mortensen and Larry Shiner, for instance, advocate this view, at least in connection with the emergence of the current conception of art.[25]

Differences in the understanding of the nature of art can also result from different vantage points: one convention is to look at the results of art practice: traditionally paintings and sculptures, and look for the similarities between them over time, and the other way is to look at the organization of the practices that produce these artifacts and to look for variation in the practices over time.

My view, employed in this chapter, is that the basic skills related to aesthetic activities and the production of objects that generate aesthetic interest, as well as the human interest in aesthetic matters, originate in the distant past, but they have developed and transformed through other mechanisms than evolutionary process. Contemporary aesthetic preferences have developed from preceding aesthetic practices and their ideals. A corresponding transformation of the system and its meanings have taken place in physical practice too – the basic urge to move and enjoy physical activity has an evolutionary background, but the meaning of these physical activities has evolved throughout history, hand in hand with the surrounding society and its culture, producing the current concept of sport. For instance, the sociologist of sport Henning Eichberg suggests that the development of modern sport, the currently dominant physical culture, has arisen from a continuum of various physical cultures, rather than through the uninterrupted existence of one particular sport.[26]

How are the changing conceptions of art and sport manifested during the historical narrative of practices? Although it is impossible to completely understand how these practices appeared at any specific historical time, formulating targeted questions about their historical comprehension may illuminate the transformation that has taken place: how did the Greeks understand the ancient sculptures and images in their own time? What was the comprehension of a medieval Parisian about the decorations in the Notre-Dame

21 Mortensen 1997, 28.

22 Danto 1997, 95.

23 Danto 1964, 580-582.

24 Danto 1981, 45, 62, 63, 65.

25 Mortensen 1997, 7. Shiner 2001, 19.

26 Eichberg 2009, 86.

Cathedral? Or, how did the locals talk about Michelangelo's new frescoes in the Sistine Chapel in Rome? What did the artists think about their professions in those days? What kinds of critiques were written about Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*? What was important for an athlete, who was just about to compete in running the *dolikhos* – about 4800 meters – at the stadium of Olympia? What was the audience expecting? What kinds of running competitions were arranged in the Roman Empire? Who was the most successful distance runner in the eighteenth century?

Some of these questions can be answered, but the answers would be quite different from the answers from our own time. Some of the questions cannot be answered, because they reflect contemporary notions of art and sport that did not exist until quite recently. The activities themselves, for example painting and sculpture, running and playing games, that form the core of today's art and sport have been around since the dawn of humanity, but the variation in their meaning before present times has been great. The contemporary conception of art and sport has been developed over a relatively short period – during the last 250 years. These practices, as we know them, are fundamentally modern, and even though similarities with historical practices can be found, the surrounding circumstances have been radically different, and have affected the context and meaning of those practices that are today understood as the distinct domains of art and sport. The effect of these differences in conception is naturally wider; past habits of appreciating paintings and sculptures or physical excellence deviated from our comprehension – if any specialized routine existed at all. Correspondingly, the forms for presenting the activities or their results were not detached from other cultural activities, as they are in our times. Generally, the neatly defined taxonomy of separate cultural practices did not exist before modern times; the further we travel back into history, the more cultural activities form inseparable parts of the general, nebulous concept of culture.

## Practices as Carriers of Meanings

Today's art and sport are loaded with various meanings: they are more than just practices of making images representing the seen world, or discharging excess physical energy. Even though the contemporary practices of art and sport form autonomous branches within today's culture, they are reciprocally connected with other cultural practices, and the meanings connected to them are used widely. How is it possible for such basic human activities to bear more abstract meanings? How can running to the next village or smearing colored earth onto a surface convey a deeper interpretation than just moving from place A to place B, or creating a crude image?

John Dewey attempted to form a plausible explanation for the transformation from concrete practice to the abstract level. His example shows how the transition from primitive counting to more abstract mathematics takes place. Mathematical ideas stay concrete when they are utilized for counting livestock or measuring land or selling goods. The means and ends are simultaneously visible. Mathematics turns abstract when the operations are freed from practical applications, when the operations are used to calculate relations between symbols instead of everyday affairs.[27] In addition to the mathematical analogy, Dewey uses a mountain metaphor to describe the development of a refined, abstract practice that is seemingly cut loose from its connection to its original uses. Mountain peaks do not float unsupported even though clouds may conceal their lower slopes: despite the confusing view, the mountains rest on the earth and are made of the same lowly material.[28]

Closer to today, Lakoff and Johnson have approached the connection of human activities and meanings from the perspective of the cognitive sciences. Like Dewey, their starting point is the bodily existence of human beings. Lakoff and Johnson believe that meanings are based on the composition of the human body, formed through the processes of evolution, and its contact with the environment, and that human thought is completely embodied. All of our thinking is the result of human bodily composition and its interaction with the environment. The human body and the environment are intertwined in various ways: the body has adapted to the environment through evolution, and because of its adaptation to certain environments it can act competently in them. Lakoff and Johnson use the development of vision as an example of the complicated relationship between a human and her environment: for instance, there are no actual "colors" in our environment that we could perceive. The retinal cones in human eyes are sensitive to a certain range of wavelengths of light. Our eyes perceive the high-, medium- and low-frequency light that is reflected from objects within the field of vision. The different colors resulting from the varying wavelengths of light do not turn into colors in our eyes, but rather the sensation of colors are formed through complex neural mechanisms in our brains. Our ability to perceive colors is embodied. The observed color red is formed as a combination of our physiological properties - the retinal cones and neural circuitry - and our conceptual ability, that gives meaning to the color red. The color system of our vision is limited, but it is adapted to our living environment, allowing us to be competent actors in it; we can discern the green of plants in order to find food and shelter, as well as the red of blood, the blue in the sky, and the yellow in the sun.[29]

Furthermore, there are other ways our bodily composition makes us competent actors in the world: our vision is accurate enough to perceive the differences between objects, animals, and fellow

27 Dewey 1929, 153-155.

28 Dewey 2005 (1934), 2.

29 Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 17, 23-25.

humans. We compare the locations and movement of objects and organisms with our own, and use these comparisons to explain the situation to others. We can manipulate objects in the world in order to obtain knowledge about them. Most of our bodily activities produce foundational knowledge about the world, and provide tools for building more developed and abstract meanings.[30]

In addition to the complex relationship between human beings and the shaping of meanings in contact with the environment, Lakoff and Johnson suggest that our actions in physical and social environments form the foundation for all important meanings, which are conceived of as metaphors. Our physical composition and sensorimotor system, combined with subjective experiences in early childhood, form embodied paths of thinking that can be verbalized as metaphors. "More Is Up", "Knowing Is Seeing" and other similar metaphors have taken a physiological form in our neural system, because of common everyday childhood experiences. These metaphors are imprinted in our bodies; they form the basis for building more complex combinations of metaphors that are required for thinking and acting in the world.[31]

The emergence of complex meanings growing from bodily existence and abilities, and taking the form of practical tasks and culturally defined practices, can be seen as similar to the formation of meanings within art and sport. Simple actions grow to become complex and metaphorically rich parts of our culture. Prehistoric art did not form a distinct cultural practice, but served concrete purposes, while contemporary art forms a separate practice and its connections with the practical everyday activities are still somewhat intermittent. Equally, sport was firstly an extension of daily tasks, if there were energies left for unproductive play. Later, the practical task and free play developed into a system that organized excess energies in a meaningful, but abstract way. Today, sport is a highly organized practice with a deep-seated structure of meanings. The sport you are interested in defines who you are. Engaging in a sport practice can make you a better person or at least a better employee. Sport success is important for the national spirit, even today. There is only a little left of the original basis as an extension of daily work.

Art as we know it is built on the previous "arts", even though the visibility of this connection is limited. There are no real breaks between current and preceding practices, but the understanding about art and its meaning has changed many times. When historical art is looked at from today's perspective, it can be recognized as art, but the original meaning is difficult if not impossible to capture.[32] Sport does not form a similar continuum as art, but its formation as a combination of previous physical activities can be traced.

At a general level of activity and operations, many historical examples of art, and sometimes also sport, seem similar to their modern counterparts, but when focusing on the system to which the activity is connected, they take an utterly different form from their modern counterparts. For instance, in art pioneering ideas existed[33], but a widespread conception about art as it is understood today was absent: a generally accepted idea of an independent realm of art was missing, and as a consequence of its absence, there existed no separate concept of the artist. The works of art were not autonomous objects, but dependent on their context and restrictions specified in the commission. In addition, the special vocabulary for aesthetics or critique had not matured yet either, not to mention the organized institutions for supporting art.[34]

The circumstances of past physical cultures are similar to those of art in past cultures; the activities preceding modern sport lack many of the features that make today's sport a unique practice. Even though the physical practice and the competitive events in modern sport resemble many historical physical practices, as well as those in physical cultures outside European culture, it is utterly different from those because of its unique features and organization. The main disparity between modern sport and its predecessors is in the organization and system.[35] Considering both art and sport, it is significant that the existence of a single manifestation that bears resemblance to today's art or sport does not lead to a similar system, and thus the notion of art or sport that developed during the nineteenth century.

# The Role of Paradigms

In his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* Thomas S. Kuhn traces the development of scientific thinking and practice through the history of physics and chemistry and the great scientific *paradigm shifts*: the Copernican, Newtonian, chemical, and Einsteinian revolutions.[36] All these paradigm shifts have emerged as sudden revolutions, and made profound changes to the way we understand the world. It is hard for us to imagine the comprehension of the world when it was believed that the earth was the center of a circumscribed universe, or when the understanding of physics was more a matter of trial and error than calculation, or when air was thought to consist of a single simple gas. Today, even though it is extremely difficult to understand Einstein's theories about relativity, they still affect our view of the world.

Drawing a parallel from the development of science to the emergence of modern conceptions about art and sport, it is nearly impossible to really understand how art was before its current organization, or comprehend a world without a contemporary concept for

30 Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 27-28, 30-31, 36.

31 Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 45-48.

32 Mortensen 1997, 7.

33 For instance, Leon Battista Alberti: De Pictura (On Painting, 1435) and Giorgio Vasari: Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori (Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects,1550).

34 Shiner 2001 5-7. Kristeller 1951.

35 Guttmann 1978, 54-55.

36 Kuhn 1996, 66.

sport. Applying Kuhn's paradigms to the development of art and sport can provide some more understanding about the changes that were needed for the emergence of today's notion of art and sport. Simo Säätelä applies Kuhn's idea about paradigms to art, in order to shed light on the emergence of modern art.[37] In a similar tone, Henning Eichberg refers to modern sport as a dominant paradigm within today's physical cultures.[38] These attempts to apply Kuhnian terminology outside the realm of science may be slightly tenuous, but I have found them useful in supporting ideas about the development of systems of art, as well as providing an explanation for the radical changes that took place in the context of the emergence of modern sport.

The difference between science and non-science cannot be found in the subject of study, but from differences in communication and education. The development of other communities can follow a paradigmatic structure that is parallel, but not similar to, the one discernible in science.[39] Säätelä replaces the concepts of communication and education with those of discourse and unspoken knowledge within the artworld. He approaches the question of paradigm changes in art through the reception of artworks – some new types of artworks can be seen as anomalies that bring the current "normal art" to a crisis point, and further to a revolution in art. This happens when the current discourse has no tools to deal with works that do not conform to the prevalent tacit knowledge.[40] The specific examples, artworks of new kind, then induce a shift in the understanding about art within the art-community. These changes in the understanding of art make it possible to see the new types of works as art, and thus transform the paradigm of art.[41] Unlike in science, a new paradigm of art does not annul the results of the preceding paradigm, the artworks, but makes the habits of action behind the artworks futile. The paradigm change in physical practices is somewhat different; the practice, for instance of running, stays predominantly the same, but its objectives, and consequently its meaning, shift. For instance, the objectives of modern competitive running were different from the previous uses of running as transportation, and today's recreational running forms a different paradigm from competitive running, even though the changes in the physical process of running are practically nonexistent.

My view is that that the development of art, as well as sport, resembles the paradigmatic development of science according to Thomas S. Kuhn's theory: they seem to have a similar paradigmatic structure, which means that there have been abrupt changes in the inner comprehension of the practices.

The history of physical practices is more fragmentary; there is no distinct succession of developing practices as there is in science or art. Instead, various physical cultures have existed before the emergence of modern sport, and each of

37 Säätelä 1988, 6.

38 Eichberg 1995 b, 31.

39 Säätelä 1988, 16-17.

40 Säätelä 1988, 160-162. Also Becker 2008 (1982), 304-305.

41 Säätelä 1988, 166.



them has promoted a different understanding about the meaning and the purpose for the physical activity. In the European culture there have been only a few comprehensive physical cultures that have affected more than just unconnected groups. The sport world of ancient Greece was the first one, followed by a long break before the emergence of gymnastics in the eighteenth century. During the time between these organized physical cultures, there existed various physical practices connected with practical skills: for example, fencing was important for defending oneself, and running couriers were needed for carrying urgent messages, but none of them formed a systematic physical culture detached from the practical context. The gymnastics system that originated in German speaking continental Europe during the eighteenth century formed the first coherent paradigm of physical culture since antiquity. Gymnastics was the dominant physical culture until the (so far) latest paradigm shift took place as modern sport replaced gymnastics by the end of the nineteenth century.

## Art and Sport as Systems

A slightly different approach to the emergence of the modern concepts of art and sport is to focus on their organization, their *systems*, through their ways of working and support systems instead of the discourse and unspoken knowledge about them. These systems are not equal to paradigms, but the changes in the systems can be seen as the results of a paradigm shift. When the understanding of a practice transforms, the framework in which it is located also changes, and vice versa.

An early attempt to deal with the role of systems in the development of art has been made by Paul Oskar Kristeller in his article "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics".[42] The article outlines the quite recent formation of art as a separate institution, which transformed art from one of the crafts to the practice we know. Kristeller describes how the arts did not form a definite practice before the eighteenth century.[43] Kristeller analyzes various aspects in the organization and institutionalization of arts, starting from classifying arts to collecting and presenting art, as well as to interpreting and appreciating art, and explains how these practices associated with the actual artistic work improved the organization of arts, until the emergence of the modern system of arts.[44]

More recently, Larry Shiner continued to investigate the development of systems of art in his book *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History*. Shiner's account analyzes the emergence of system of art from a similar starting point as Kristeller's, but instead of stopping with the emergence of the modern system of art Shiner

42 Originally published in two parts: Kristeller 1951 and Kristeller 1952.

43 Kristeller 1951, 498.

44 Kristeller 1951 and 1952.

continues further towards today's situation.[45] Shiner's key concept in tracing the formation of art is to focus on the separation of art and craft; how a nebulous group of skill-based human practices was separated into art and crafts, which were later presented as contrasting categories. Shiner emphasizes the connection between the state of society in various historical periods, and is openly critical towards the tendency to project contemporary ideals about the status of art and crafts, artists, and artisans into a totally different situation and world view.[46]

Preben Mortensen approaches the emergence of our conception of art from a somewhat different angle. Instead of following the historical development that led to our understanding of art, he probes various habits of action that firstly prevent us from seeing the difference between today's notion of art and preceding circumstances, and secondly explicates the changes in behavior and thought that assisted in the emergence of the modern conception of art. While Shiner emphasizes the practical changes that have taken place in the context of making artworks, Mortensen´s study focuses on the changes in society, as well as changes in the conception of individual humanity, that made it possible for art to ascend into a special position in European culture.[47]

The development of sport corresponds to the evolution of art, although it is more fragmentary and sporadic than that of art, especially as the rise of Christianity after the fall of the Roman Empire caused a long intermission in the development of organized physical cultures. In addition, the development of sport took place in a significantly smaller region than the development of art. However, the crucial developments during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that lead to the modern concept of sport are a part of the same transformation of societies that also produced the modern concept of art, and more generally modern European culture as a whole.[48]

The traditional, local and unsystematic physical cultures began to be organized into a coherent system through the emergence of gymnastics in the nineteenth century. In the late nineteenth century, the continental practice of gymnastics was surpassed by English competitive sport, which was the prevalent physical culture in the twentieth century. Gymnastics and sport had similarities in their details, but their core ideas were profoundly different: in gymnastics, the primary objective was performing the exercise correctly according to the program, whereas in sport, the target was striving for better achievement within the limits of the rules. In spite of these differences, both practices played a central role in the development of contemporary sport culture. Gymnastics introduced the idea of a regular training program, and promoted the benefits of exercise for general health and well-being. The emergence of modern sport brought the development of written rules, and introduced the ideas of comparable records, fair play, and amateur sport. Together, these practices formed a solid foundation for the current, all-pervasive, physical culture.

In the following chapter, my approach is to look for parallels between the cultural histories of art and sport by adapting the ideas about the development of art practice to sport. Despite the differences in their general histories, the emergence of modern sport has a comparable structure to the development the modern conception of art. The background development to both transitions are the same; the secularization of culture, together with scientific revolutions and the differentiation of cultural practices. During their later development, the configuration of modern sport and the second system of art also formed parallel systems. Research about the cultural history of sport, as well as the sociology of sport, is used to focus attention on special details in the development of sport, as it has a different structure than art.

In this part of the study, I focus on the typical aspects in the changes of the practices of art and sport on their way towards contemporary practices, not only the extraordinary details and revolutionary turns within the practices. My interest lies in that part of the development that is usually left in the shadow of the greatest examples of art or the records in sport: changes in everyday practices.

45 Shiner 2001.

46 For instance Shiner 2001, 31-33, 34.

47 Mortensen 1997.

48 Elias 1986, 27-30. Mortensen 1997, 72-74.

# 3 • The Development of the Modern Practices of Art and Sport





The English word art is an ambiguous one; it can refer to a vast repertoire of human skills, and products as well. According to Shiner, the ambiguity of language forms the major defect in understanding the development of art, fundamentally in the word *art* itself. When something is named art, it is difficult to separate if the matter concerns a skill or art as a laudatory category - as we know it. Originally the opposite of art (as a skill) was nature, not art (as a creative category) as opposite to craft, as it is in modernity and even today. Originally the question "Is it art?" was understood "Is it a human product?" as opposed to a natural product. Today the question is understood as a doubt about the product belonging to the category of fine art.[49] In addition to the linguistic ambiguity concerning the word art, the cultural category of art has an ambiguous nature: our common conception of it incorporates only the art that has emerged from European tradition, ignoring the conceptions used in other cultures.[50]

The contemporary notion of the special and elevated category of art is a result from the long development of European culture. Shiner and Kristeller approach the position of arts in various social systems, from ancient Greece to today's Europe, by a couple of central means. The first is figuring out how arts (today visual/fine arts, music, literature and theatre) are grouped together with other activities in current social systems. The arts' position within other activities illustrates its connections, and thus its value or rank in a society. When poetry, music, and visual arts have not been grouped together, they have not been understood as similar activities. For instance, when music is connected with geometry and astronomy it is understood as an activity close to the mathematics – different from sculpture, because the latter is connected with carpentry and other crafts. Parallel to the analysis of the separation of art and crafts and the final formation of the concept of art, the formation and clarification of the modern intellectual sphere of sciences and humanities is described. The accounts outline a slow but accelerating shift towards the modern differentiation of cultural practices.

The changes in the conception of the artist's characteristics are the second indicator Shiner uses to trace art's position in society. He sees an ideal artist in the modern system as an imaginative, original, and autonomous subject, and contrasts these features

49 Shiner 2001, 5.

50 Mortensen 1997, 2.

with others ascribed to painters, sculptors, poets, and musicians in earlier times.[51]

The third indicator for the development of art which Shiner uses is the state of the institutional organization of the arts. This also includes the level of aesthetic appreciation of art. The changes in this indicator are visible in the evolution of the institutions of art, and the aesthetic judgments of it, over time. When a society builds spaces for art, and creates a supporting system for the arts in the form of specific institutions, art certainly has a different position than in a society where art exists only as a part of everyday practices and integrated into common buildings, spaces, and events. Analogously, if a society has a need for a special interpretation and aesthetic appreciation of art, there must be a more complex understanding of art than in a society where art is a mere decoration, or an organic part of other social or religious practices. Furthermore, the understanding of art obviously changes if the individuality and originality of the artist or the artwork are valued over the mechanical skill of the execution. The development of the current institutions of art, as well as the evaluation of painting, sculpture, music, theatrical performances, and architecture shows how the understanding about them has grown more complex since the emergence of the modern conception of art.

Sport is, if possible, a more ambiguous word than art. In English culture the word sport means a wide variety of activities, from track and field events to football, and further to mountaineering

51 Shiner 2001, 23.

and hunting. Even fishing can be a sport. Even though modern sport is today understood as the core of sport, the variety of activities included in the concept of sport is vast. There are sports that can be judged by quantitative methods, by measuring and counting, or by qualitative methods, by the human eye - or by the combination of these two. A sport can be a team game or a single performance. Today, even a noncompetitive action can be seen as a sport; Lev Kreft ends up with a definition where voluntarily engaging in a physical activity against unnecessary obstacles is enough to demarcate sport from other, useful physical activities.[52] According to this description, climbing the stairs instead of taking an elevator is practicing sport. The ambiguous use of the word sport makes understanding the difference between historical and non-western physical practices, as well as modern and postmodern sports, equivalent to the difficulty of understanding the various meanings of art. While the core practices of sport are still based on a limited European tradition, sport culture has incorporated and "sportified" physical traditions that originally have concentrated on other ideals than those of modern sport. The convention of extending the concept of sport to the majority of physical cultures makes it even more difficult to perceive the differences between the various uses of sport, and to separate other physical cultures from the dominant practice of sport.

Generally, sport historians have been more interested in emphasizing the continuity of sport from the ancient

52 Kreft 2012, 223-225.





Olympics to modern sport, rather than critically examining the formation of the various physical cultures in European history. Even though the trend has been to emphasize the continuity and tradition of sport, there are scholars who stress the changes in the comprehension of the meaning and purpose of physical activities, as well as their position in their societies.[53] In order to explicate the unique conception of modern sport, Allen Guttmann compiled a list of central features that separate modern sport from its predecessor. These include: modern sport is secular, there is an equal opportunity to compete, the conditions of the competition are fair, the roles in sport are specialized, the system of sport is rational and bureaucratic, and finally quantification and the quest for records form the central values of sport.[54] All the features listed are present in modern sport, but only few at the same time in any of the previous physical cultures.

The terminology used in sport history is even more vague than in the case of art. Most writers, for example Richard D. Mandell and Allen Guttmann, use the term sport in an unproblematized manner throughout history. Henning Eichberg and John Bale, in contrast, use terms like body culture, physical culture, and running culture to emphasize the special organization of modern sport. Later, contemporary trends in sport have attempted to separate themselves from the original concept of modern sport by naming themselves in various ways, such as post-sports, unofficial sports, extreme sports, alternative sports, lifestyle sports, new sports, or new games. My choice is to operate with a general notion of physical culture that consists of several different practices: *modern sport* is the tradition of competitive sports beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, *gymnastics* the German tradition from the nineteenth century, *play and games* are prevalent at various times in history, and *post-sports* denote the contemporary alternatives to modern sport.

This chapter lays the foundation for the closer study of present-day forms of art and sport by demonstrating how the modern and contemporary ideas connected to them are historically unique and how the emergence of these practices is closely tied to the formation of modern European culture.

53 For instance, Dunning, Eichberg, Elias and Guttmann.

54 Guttmann 1978, 16.

# Before Art and Sport

## *Antiquity*

Though the ancient Greeks produced objects we would call artworks, the conception of these objects was far from ours – there was always a practical dimension connected to them. The special category of art did not exist. Neither a precise word for art did exist. Word *techne* in Greek, and later Roman *ars,* were the closest equivalents to art, but still very unlike it. The five major arts, painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry did not exist as conceptually autonomous activities. Techne or ars was used for the ability to make things and to perform. The concept contained various practices: for instance, carpentry, poetry, shoemaking, medicine, sculpture, and horse breaking were included. However, the practices included in techne/ars were not exactly specified.[55] The group of arts was not separated from other human activities, like proto-sciences or crafts.[56] While today's art holds an elevated position in our culture, Greek art was tightly embedded in the functional context. It had social, political, religious, and practical meanings that were part of mundane life. Architecture had practical purposes that shadowed the distinct artistic aspects, sculptures and paintings were functional cult objects, music and theatrical performances were part of everyday recreation without any elevated status.[57] The institutional organization of arts in Greece was low. With the exception of theatre, Greek culture did not have a specialized infrastructure for presenting the arts. Like the category of art, the category of an artist did not exist. Those who designed and executed the important but functional objects (buildings, sculpture, pottery) were skilled artisans, and no conception of special creativity was associated with their work. The artisan's work involved physical labor and/or payment, and was suitable only for the lower classes in the Greek society.

The later Hellenistic and Roman categorization of arts[58] places the physical work in the *vulgar* or *servile* arts, while the highborn and educated pursued *liberal* arts, which included a varying combination of activities depending on the writer. The activities included in liberal arts were generally understood as grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, as well as arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music (for its mathematical nature). Medicine and architecture were also sometimes considered a part of the liberal arts, but no combination equivalent to the later combination of fine arts existed. However, this first categorization into liberal and vulgar/servile arts served as a basis for the later classifications of human activities.[59]

55 Shiner 2001, 19, 22.

56 Kristeller 1951, 497-498.

57 Shiner 2001, 24-25.
Also Dewey 2005, 2-3.

58 Arts as skills.

59 Shiner 2001, p.22. Kristeller 1951, 505.



Their notion of aesthetics also deviated from ours. Because the arts were embedded in social functions, there was no special contemplative attitude towards them. The arts in antiquity were closely connected to intellectual, moral, religious, and practical functions or contents. In other words, music was not listened to in silence with a special concentration, and theater performance did not require a silent audience. Both arts functioned as a part of and as a background for religious ceremonies and general socializing.[60] The elevated and distanced attitude towards objects and performances that was seen as an integral part of aesthetic contemplation was not known. In addition, the conception of beauty had another sort of meaning; it was connected to not only external looks, but also to moral good. Human beauty was a combination of physical looks and "beautiful habits of the soul" and "beautiful cognitions".[61]

In a similar way to art, sport was seen from a different perspective in antiquity, although it is often difficult to understand. Greek sport seems superficially similar to modern sport; there was even a structured organization in ancient sports, but analogously to the organization of art in Greece, its relation to other, mainly religious and political practices, makes Greek sport unlike ours. If the features of modern sport presented by Guttmann are applied to Greek sport, the differences become obvious: instead of being secular, sport is a religious practice[62]; there is no equality of opportunity to compete, however there is equality in the conditions of the competition; the specialization of roles existed, to a degree; rationalization can be seen in the rules of Greek sports, as well as in training for sport events; bureaucratic organization can also be found in ancient sport. However, the important features of modern sport: quantification and the quest for records were not present in Greek sport culture. The Greeks appreciated only the winner of the competition and there was no comparison between the events. The idea of competition was to figure out the winner, only the winner and only for that occasion. In spite the fact that Greek sport is the closest historical equivalent to modern sport, the most important aspects of modern sport were not a part of it. Still, much of the history of sport is characterized by an unproblematic and idolizing vision about ancient sport being rather analogous to the sport of our time.[63]

The apparent similarity of Greek and modern sports is best seen in the Olympic Games. The antique Olympic Games, which have served as the ideal for the modern Olympics, seem especially similar to their modern counterpart: the games were organized in four year intervals, and many of the sport events (sprints, long jump, javelin, wrestling, etc.) are clearly the predecessors of their modern versions. However, the similarity is only an illusion, because of this simple reason: the modern Olympics were specifically designed to bear a resemblance to the Olympic festival of classical times. The

60 Shiner 2001, 24-25.

61 Kristeller 1951, 499-500.
Reid 2012, 293.

62 Golden, Mark 2009, 91.

63 For example: Koski, Rissanen and Tahvanainen 2004.

modern games combine the ideals of modern sport with the late nineteenth century idealized understanding of Greek culture. The worship of Greek gods that was an integral part of the antique Olympics has been displaced by an elaborate secular opening ceremony. Other lesser known similarities, like the hiring of coaches and athletes from other countries (in antiquity city-states), or acquiring sponsorships to cover costs, can be seen as common practice when high status is pursued through sport.[64]

Many sporting events in classical Greece were derived from so-called natural sports, which are extensions and refinements of everyday acts. Another source for sports was military practices, where events like wrestling, the *pancration* (a Greek free fight), or archery were developed. The third category of Greek sports includes the events for horses. Exercising – practicing sport – was part of the general culture in Greece, and closely connected to compulsory military training. Greek *polises* did not have paid armies, and all men needed to be able to defend the *polis* effectively. Sport was a means to achieve and keep up the physical conditioning and skills needed in battle. This was especially true in Sparta, where training was strictly organized and a compulsory part of a man's life. Elsewhere in Greece exercising was not centrally organized, and it had connotations outside of its military use. Keeping oneself in good physical condition, together with developing the intellect, were seen as the means to a balanced and successful life. [65]

Running was one of the central sports in Greek competitions; the most important events were different sprints. Distance running existed in Greece, but had a lesser importance. Running events in classical competitions was performed at stadiums, and the sprints of one or two stadii (stadium lengths, *stadion* and *diaulos*) were the most celebrated running events. The maximum running distance in competitions was a *dolikhos* (the long race), which was 7, 12, 20, or 24 stadium lengths. The most common length of dolikhos was 24 stadii, only about 4800 meters. Running distances longer than the dolikhos was considered work, and the runners who ran greater distances were professional messengers, not athletes. In addition to these races, which look fairly normal from the modern viewpoint, the Greeks had special events where the runners carried arms, bunches of grapes, or torches. While the first is related to military exercises, the latter had ritual and religious meanings. The run with torches diverged from other types of running competitions, as it was often a relay that took place in the streets and roads. These races were only local events, and never occurred as a part of the great sport events.[66]

Unlike Greek arts, Greek sport had specially built institutions. There were buildings dedicated to sport, and established competition practices that were more detached elements of culture than

64 Mandell 1984, 53-55. Golden 2009, 107.

65 Mandell 1984, 43, 56, 61-62. Koski, Rissanen and Tahvanainen 2004, 41-43.

66 Koski, Rissanen and Tahvanainen 2004, 44-47. Golden 2009, 109.





the Greek arts, but the physical culture was also mostly connected to other cultural and social elements. The great stadiums built only for sporting events were rare, but local baths and gymnasiums served essentially as places for everyday exercise as well as daily social life, education and leisure.[67]

At a later point in classical antiquity, the Romans partially adopted the Greek style of sport, however it did not really win favor among the Romans, and the tradition started to fade. One reason for this was the Roman attitude towards physical exercise. For the Romans, physical training was seen as more practical than the Greek attitude, which emphasized the general good achieved through the balanced training of the mind and body. Roman culture did not encourage personal training for other goals than physical excellence, so the Greek idea of the importance of physical exercise as the balancing element of life vanished. In Rome, exercise was purely a means to achieve the endurance and toughness that were needed to fulfill a citizen's responsibilities. When Greek sport lost its importance on a personal level, the same happened for Greek style competitions too. Greek sports were not exiting enough for the Romans. Greek sporting events never achieved great popularity in Rome, and were replaced by more spectacular entertainment to please the Roman tastes – gladiator and animal fights and chariot races. The Roman period replaced Greek sports with a festival type of event, where the physical excellence that Greeks celebrated played a minor role. Greek athletes performed in time slots between gladiators and animal fights. The "original" athletes were paralleled to other performers like gladiators.[68]

During the time of Greek sports there had already been signs of the secularization of sport, and Roman sports continued the same trend. When sport competitions were arranged as entertainment, they lost their connection to religious practices. The athlete's physical performance before the gods was less important than his workmanlike professionalism. Equality in sports had no place in gladiator fights; the combats were organized between fighters equipped with different arms. Men with swords encountered men with tridents and nets, or animals, not against men with similar weapons. The professionalism in the Roman gladiator fights led to the high specialization of roles. While the Greeks had sporting events that recurred throughout centuries, the Romans were more interested in variation, in order to attract and amuse the spectators. The level of bureaucratization was rather high; the gladiators were organized in *xystos*, the imperial guild. The xystos took care of the rules, regulations, and entrance requirements of the fights, and even organized the materials and equipment for gladiators. Quantification of sports developed to some degree during the Roman Empire. Romans were more interested in statistics than Greeks. Instead of documenting only the winner, the Romans did more: they also recorded the second positions as well as

67 Koski, Rissanen and Tahvanainen 2004, 84.

68 Mandell 1984, 74-75, 79-81. Koski, Rissanen and Tahvanainen 2004.

more specialized records, like winning from the chasing position etc. The idea of the "record" remained similar to that in Greek sport culture; the competitor who had won several times was more distinguished than the one-time winner. In spite of the decline of Greek style sports, the Olympic festivals continued until the end of the third century and the rise of Christianity. The Roman period ended the Greek tradition of sport, which had formed the first organized physical culture. [69]

Distance running had no importance within Roman sports. Romans, fascinated by fights and other spectacles, found it tiresome. However some examples of distance running outside the performances of professional messengers have been found. For example, the Roman stoic philosopher Seneca promoted running as healthy exercise, which should accompany the exercising of the mind in order to develop the man as a whole.[70]

### *The European Middle Ages*

After the classical period, the classification of human activities as vulgar/servile and liberal arts changed to some degree. Firstly, the disparaging terms vulgar and servile were replaced in the twelfth century, by Hugh of St. Victor, with the term mechanical arts. The mechanical arts were also denoted in other ways: in the classical period there had been seven liberal arts: logic, grammar and rhetoric – the *trivium*, and arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music theory – the *quadrivium*.[71] Hugh of St. Victor suggested that the categorization should be updated, so that there would be also seven mechanical arts: wearing, armament, commerce, agriculture, hunting, medicine, and theatrics. These general categories were divided into various subcategories or -divisions. For instance, architecture - with sculpture, painting, and other crafts - were subcategories of armament, and the main category of theatrics contained all kinds of entertainment.[72]

Shiner connects this change to the ascent of the craftsman's status. Medieval culture appreciated skilled workmanship in crafts, and many practices today considered to be mere crafts, for instance embroidery and carpentry, reached high quality both technically as well as in their contents. Still, no group of skilled artisans was classified as a different category of maker. Artisans worked under a guild system that regulated their trade and oversaw of the quality of their work. A master who ran a workshop was responsible for its products, however his work was not seen as special creativity, but as "intelligent planning, imaginative conception and sound judgment"[73]. Painting and sculpture were still merged with other mechanical crafts, both as intellectual categories and as products. They were executed in connection with furniture, interior decoration, or architecture. The concept of an autonomous artist or work of art did not exist in Medieval culture.

A slight change in the conception of aesthetic attitudes took place during the Middle Ages. New types of considerations about beauty emerged in medieval philosophy, but instead of applying these reflections about beauty to human products and performances, they were directed to the beauty of God and nature. Furthermore, the term beauty had a wider meaning than today, although the notion of beauty departed from the classical idea. Beauty was not only seen as a detached feature of an object or a human being, but should be in the right proportion in relation to its purpose; the objects should show beauty in their conformity to their purpose.[74] According to Kristeller, artistic production and artistic appreciation existed in the Middle Ages, and marks of the latter one can be found in the literature, but the notions of art and aesthetics differ from today's conception of them.

During the Middle Ages, physical culture loses the remainder of its somewhat advanced organization from the classical period. The Medieval conception of physical culture was scattered, and resembled neither Greek nor our system of sport. The demise of systematic physical cultures was finalized by the spread of Christianity, which gave priority to the spiritual element of life and suppressed the physical. The only physical practices that had a somewhat organized nature were the military "sports", which included tournaments and archery competitions.[75] In spite the lowly position of physical activities in the Middle Ages, the local competitions and games had regional importance as uniting traditions. While there was no common conception of sport during the Middle Ages, many physical activities included in classical sports (running, wrestling, etc.) were pursued, but in a different context; running was practiced as part of the messenger's profession, and wrestling as local entertainment, with greatly varying rules.[76] Physical activities formed a part of local festivals, and they sometimes included festive running events. These running events took place in streets and public squares. They were not serious competitions of physical excellence like those in modern sport, but organic parts of the festival, where the spectacle and sharing fun and laughter was more important than winning the race. Generally, after the fall of classical culture the established organization and the idea of sport as a separate practice vanished for several centuries – there is no reason to compare Guttmann's features of modern sport to the Medieval conceptualization of sport.[77]

69 Gotaas 2009, 41-43. Koski, Rissanen and Tahvanainen 2004, 135. Guttmann 1978, 15-55 passim.

70 Gotaas 2009, 40-41.

71 Kristeller 1951, 505, 507. Shiner 2001, 30.

72 Shiner 2001, 28-29. Kristeller 1951, p.508.

73 Shiner 2001, 31.

74 Shiner 2001, 33-34.

75 Mandell 1984, 113-115.

76 Mandell 1984, 121. Bale 2004, 40.

77 Mandell 1984, 113. Gotaas 2009, 68.

# Towards the Modern Conception of Art and Sport

Even though art histories frequently view the Renaissance as the time when the modern idea of art first emerged, in the form of autonomous artists and artworks, there was in fact no radical departure from the previous conception of art. The Medieval categorization of cultural practices into the liberal and mechanical arts evolved only slightly during the next few centuries. The previous class of liberal arts stayed exactly the same, as did its internal division into the trivium and quadrivium. In addition to the old categories, a new grouping of *studia humanitatis* was established. This pedagogical grouping was developed by humanist teachers who expanded the Medieval trivium to include history and moral philosophy, and replaced the study of logic with poetry. These adjustments to the Medieval categorization were minor refinements, however, and no fundamental change took place. Nevertheless, there were some steps taken towards the modern conception of art. In 1563 the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno - the Florentine Academy - was established in Florence by a group of local painters and sculptors led by Giorgio Vasari. The members of the academy had achieved freedom from the medieval guild regulations, and emphasized the connection of their work with the liberal arts. The famous phrase "Ut pictura poesis"[78] by Horace was used in order to claim painting's place as one of the liberal arts.[79] However, Shiner emphasizes that the members of the academy were still referred to as *artificers,* in the same way as other skilled craftsmen.[80] Kristeller's view is that in the Renaissance the Florentine artists formed a separate group, situated between liberal and mechanical arts. This resulted not only from the quality of their work, but also the new links that were created between the visual arts (painting), liberal arts, and poetry.[81]

However, the situation was not clear: Benevento Cellini, who can be seen as a stereotype of the Renaissance genius in his actions and attitude towards art, made no difference between the decorative arts and the emerging category of art. Many of the Renaissance artists started their careers in a decorative art craft, but eventually moved away from those professions and towards art. This development took place, for example, with Brunelleschi and Botticelli, who started off as goldsmiths, but Cellini was not concerned about painting or "real sculpture", and continued his work with precious materials. Cellini is also an example of the vague relationship between a patron and the growing individuality of an artist: he had a regular patron (King Francis I), but he did not settle for waiting for commissions from him, and advanced his own ideas in a similar fashion to modern artists.[82]

In addition to the slight change in the institutional status of art, the artist's status developed too. The concept of the autonomous artist or work of art did not arise yet, but Shiner finds at least three significant manifestations of the changed status of artists. Firstly, the genre of the artist's biography was born, and the life of at least some artists was seen as worthy of special attention. Secondly, the first self-portraits were painted; at least some artist saw themselves as worthy of special attention. Also, the way in which artists presented themselves was unique; Shiner uses the gentlemanly habitus of Albrect Dürer in his self-portrait as an example. Thirdly, the class of court artist was established. These artists did not have to acquire commissions from all sides, but instead sold their ideas and works to one sympathetic master. Naturally, these changes in the status of some artists did not affect all painters, sculptors, musicians, or writers; only a few artists benefited from these changes, but they represented the first fracture between artists and artisans.[83]

Those artists who enjoyed this higher status were not absolutely autonomous in their work. The difference from the current state can be seen in the Renaissance contracts, where not only the size, price, and the date of delivery of a painting or a statue were specified, but also the subject matter and materials. The conditions defined in the contract could be even more strict. Because most successful painters and sculptors ran a workshop, the contract could specify which parts of a portrait should be painted by the master himself and which could be executed by an apprentice. This convention did not deviate too much from the commission practices of other craftsmen at the time. However, the idea of an artist as an individual was emerging. The artist biographies treated the painter, sculptor, or architect as figures whose individual abilities were valued more highly than the traditional skills of a workshop.[84]

During the Renaissance, artist's qualities began to differ from those of artisans. The most appreciated quality was facility, the extraordinary skill in creating technically demanding works, for instance a difficult shortening in painting. Invention was not connected with the modern idea of creation, but the ability to find, choose, and arrange the content of the work. Later, innovation was also associated with poetical qualities like imagination, inspiration, and natural talent. All of these qualities were connected with the ability to create unique works with natural ease and without hard labor. The Renaissance artist was not valued for his self-expression as an autonomous creator, but his ability to accomplish demanding tasks with facility and grace. An excellent work represented a technical difficulty that was executed with ease and natural ability. The technical elements of craftsmanship were inseparable from

78 "As is painting so is poetry."

79 Shiner 2001, 37. Also Kristeller 1951, 513-514.

80 Shiner 2001, 40.

81 Kristeller 1951, 513.

82 Barker, Webb, and Woods 1999, 30-31.

83 Shiner 2001, 39. Barker, Webb, and Woods 1999, 15, 17.

84 Shiner 2001, 6, 40, 43, 61. Wolff 1994 (1981), 44. Many of the conditions listed are not unfamiliar in contemporary contracts either. Especially in public art projects, there can be several terms that limit the artist's freedom.

the inspiration and imitation of nature, which were subject to servicing certain predefined purposes. Unlike modern artists, the Renaissance masters did not have the freedom of creation and executing their own ideas, but were subservient to the boundaries of the commission and purpose of their work.[85]

The practices leading towards an aesthetic appreciation of the arts advanced somewhat during the Renaissance. The transition from previous attitudes towards art to a "proto-aesthetic" started with a couple of minor changes; a distinguished vocabulary for commenting on the qualities of the paintings and sculptures emerged. Another mark of the new interest in artworks was the private interest in collecting individual paintings by a certain master. These paintings were often part of larger private collections. Collecting was not systematic by today's standards, but a more or less sporadic activity run by private enthusiasts. A collection could contain artworks (paintings and sculptures) mixed with natural items or technological curiosities. The Renaissance collections made little of differences between the objects according to modern categories – any precious and fascinating objects were collected in the same cabinet of curiosities.[86]

Even though these first collections were composed of mixed items, a classification reminiscent of the modern one started to develop. Instead of just preserving the various objects without a plan, the collectors began to organize their collections according to the practices developed in medical and pharmaceutical contexts.[87] During the first stages of classification of the cabinets of curiosity, the basic distinction between natural and artificial (man-made) objects was made. Later, it was replaced by a finer classification according to the origin and purpose of the objects. This more accurate categorization existed in different versions; for instance, the collection could be divided in relation to the understanding of the structure of the universe: paintings, sacred objects, objects made from inorganic material, objects made from organic materials (divided into three realms: earth, water and air), and finally the artifacts and material glorifying the founder. A classification closer to that of the modern museum divided the collection into fine art (paintings and sculptures), applied arts (fine crafts), natural history, and historical material.[88]

Paintings, sculptures, and prints already received special attention compared to other objects. There was a specialized vocabulary for describing them and identifying the important artists. Collected artworks were frequently arranged into appropriate groupings according to their subjects, and paintings often covered the whole wall. Occasionally, paintings were cut in order to fit them into the display.[89]

Despite spreading of the Renaissance ideas about humanism outside northern Italy in the late fifteenth century, the position of the arts in other parts of Europe remained more akin to the crafts, following the old traditions of guild-based crafts. Another rather isolated sign of the changing conditions in the arts took place in the Dutch Republic, where a local "art market" developed. The local painters did not work only from commissions, but made paintings to be sold in shops and markets. This convention resulted in new, although limited, freedom from patronage for the Dutch painters.[90]

Physical activities were still connected to local festivals. The horse races in Siena and the archery tournaments held throughout Europe formed the closest resemblance to an organized physical culture. However, the influence of classical ideas in the Renaissance brought back some elements of ancient physical culture. The almost total denial of the body in early Christianity began to be dismissed. This changing attitude towards bodily existence was first seen in the physical education of higher class children. Traditionally, the physical education of higher class offspring had been limited to military training, but now this limitation was questioned. However, the actual changes in physical education were sparse, in most cases the new ideas remained only concepts or suggestions. In spite of the minimal alterations in real education, these ideas represented a new, more positive attitude towards the body and bodily health.[91] Late in this period, some instances of pre-sports emerged, the best example of which is probably the development of the *jeu de paume*, a precursor of modern tennis that was played first in the open air, but later in the early seventeenth century in specially designed indoor ball-courts. The game, played by the nobility, was also one of the first sports where special equipment (the rackets) was developed. However, being a game for one class only, it did not represent a sport in the modern sense.[92]

## The Transition to the Category of Art

The Medieval division of human activities into the liberal and mechanical arts had survived through the Renaissance, with the addition of the pedagogical category of studia humanitatis. In spite of some progress in linking unconnected arts together under one category, no radical changes occurred in the categorization of human activities. During the subsequent period of rapid changes, the position of art within human activities was re-evaluated several times. The origin of the changes can be located in the separation of the experimental sciences from their previous categorization in the liberal arts, an event that leads to a serious confusion in the old categorization of human activities. The reason that sciences were

85 Shiner 2001, 46.

86 Shiner 2001, 55. Impey and MacGregor 1985, 31. Turpeinen 2005, 47.

87 Impey and MacGregor 1985, 6-7.

88 Pearce 1992, 95.

89 Pearce 1992, 93-94.

90 Shiner 2001, 61.

91 Mandell 1984, 122-125.

92 Eichberg 1998, 50-51.

the first activity to really separate themselves from the traditional categorization was the awareness of the fact that the new results in experimental sciences were surpassing classical knowledge – an idea that has been inconceivable before. Even before this became widely acknowledged, the fundamental difference between the arts and sciences had been noticed; while practicing natural sciences required objective measuring and calculation, practicing arts was a domain of individual talent. Sciences were based on accumulated knowledge, while fine arts were seen as dependent on the genius of the individual.[93] The practices in the new category of experimental sciences could exceed the achievements of the classical world, whereas in the arts the contemporaneous works could, at their best, equal classical works.[94]

Even though sciences formed their own category, the arts were still scattered among various human activities. The vital features of art required more clarification in order to form a definitive category of fine art. Shiner points out a few central aspects that were required before the arts could establish a new category for themselves like the sciences had done: there should be a limited set of arts, a commonly agreed body of terms to identify the new category, and most importantly clear principle(s) to determine the members of this category.  The limited set of arts was eventually formalized in the 1740s, when painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry, and music were grouped together. Other arts were added to this core group later. The term *Beaux Arts* was used to describe the group of visual arts in the late seventeenth century, but during the first half of the eighteenth century the use of the term was expanded to include all members in the category of fine arts.

The question of defining suitable principle(s) for justifying the grouping of different arts under the same category was more complicated. The earlier principles used to formulate the differentiation of some arts, or liberal arts in general from other practices, were either too narrow or too wide.

"The principle of design used by the Italian academies since the Renaissance was too narrow due its close connection with the visual arts. The ancient liberal arts principle of mind over body was too broad since it would not by itself account for separating painting, poetry, and music as a group from the arts of grammar or history. One other long-established principle, imitation, was similarly too broad since it included activities such as embroidery, pottery, or birdcalls that might also imitate nature."[95]

The antique principle of employing the powers of the mind instead of the body, used for separating the liberal arts from the mechanical arts, did not determine the difference between the new group of fine arts and the old category of liberal arts. The Renaissance principle of design was not suitable either, because its previous use was connected to the visual arts only. Also, the previously employed principle of imitation, when used alone, was inadequate and too broad because

93 Kristeller 1952, 19.

94 Shiner 2001, 79-80.

95 Shiner 2001, 82.





of its use in the context of crafts. By the mid-eighteenth century, after a lengthy passage, the newly grouped set of five beaux arts found their place under the main principle of *imagination*.[96]

*Les Beaux-Arts réduits à un même principe* (The Fine Arts Reduced to a Single Principle) (1746) by Charles Batteux, was the first text that clearly defined the original fine arts as a separate group. Batteux divided the human skills into three groups. The mechanical skills (Arts Mécaniques) were used to serve the humanity's needs, provide shelter from the elements, and bring comfort to living. Fine arts (Beaux Arts) arise from the feelings that produced prosperity (abundance) and tranquility, providing joy to the people. The group of fine arts contained *music*, *poetry*, *painting*, *sculpture,* and *dance*. In addition to this separation of arts from practical skills, Batteux constituted a third group, which consisted of skills that combined two previous objectives: eloquence and architecture. In addition to the separation of fine arts into their own group, Batteux also connected them with a common denominator: the principle connecting the arts was the imaginative imitation of beautiful nature.[97] However, just imitating nature was not enough: the artist must rearrange the imitations in order to create a work that is more ideal than the original source of inspiration. To achieve this result, the artist needed genius.[98] Batteux's principles were sufficient for separating the group of fine arts from the old categorization into the liberal and mechanical arts, and they also assisted in founding a new branch for fine arts in the *tree of knowledge,* which was used as an explanatory illustration in the encyclopedias of the time. Eventually, imagination (art) found its place side by side with reason (science) and memory (history).[99]

The constitution of the category of fine art also had its institutional effects; the modern art institutions began to find their form during the eighteenth century. Theater and opera had found their form earlier, but other practices of presenting art became customary through the establishment of the modern system of art. For example, art exhibitions and secular concerts are practices less than three centuries old. The yearly salons organized by the recently established art academies were the first regular art exhibitions (relatively) open to the public. Also, some royal collections started to exhibit works of art separate from their other exhibits, venues which were gradually turned to art museums.[100]

The change in the system of art produced a new idealized behavior for looking at and appreciating art. For example, music performances turned into concerts that where listened to in silence, instead of as background for civilized socializing. Theater underwent a similar transformation; it had previously been the habit that the most important members of the audience were seated on the stage, but now this practice began to change; presenting

96 Shiner 2001, 82.

97 Batteux 1746, 6, 8.
Kristeller 1952, 20-21.

98 Batteux 1746, 8, 40.

99 Shiner 2001, 82-86.

100 Shiner 2001, 90-91.
Pearce 1992, 99-100.

an illusion became the ideal for theater performances and, in order to preserve the illusion, stage seating was eliminated and the audience was requested to follow the play in silence.[101]

Art exhibitions, especially in the new public art museums, reinforced the practice of the silent appreciation of art. For example, the Louvre, which was partially opened as an art museum during the French revolution, had sign-posts in the exhibition spaces to guide the public's behavior – to avoid excessive noise and respect the space as a temple of art. When visiting art exhibitions became a common practice, the need for guidance also grew. The new middle class audience for visual arts did not need basic guidance, but required information about the quality and noteworthiness of the works of art. This new need for information about art led to the development of art criticism, and further to the emergence of the first histories of art. For lower class audiences, a museum visit could develop into a confusing experience, where the purpose of art remained obscure. The advent of aesthetics, in combination with the development of fine art and newly refined behavior connected to appreciating works of art, lead to the separation of popular and high culture, where the former diminished to mere recreation and entertainment and latter obtained an elevated and ethereal nature.[102]

In addition to the elevated appreciation of art, the museums began to provide knowledge. In the early stages of the development, the paintings were just divided into the national schools, but later, when art history developed further, the artworks in a museum display were also arranged in chronological order. The collections also presented the older paintings and sculptures – going back to classical times – as a part of the history of art. Even though the category of art was just forming, the historical depth of art was created in retrograde. In many cases, the artworks were framed again in uniform style and clearly labeled in order to educate the visitors.[103]

In addition to the constitution of the scholarly category of fine art, the development of art practices was influenced by social change. Preben Mortensen connects the growing interest in art, and the development of the concept of taste – the first widespread practice of exchanging views about art – to the transformation of English society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The civil wars, revolution (1646), and Restoration (after 1660) ended the monarch's ultimate power and reduced the weight of the church's authority. The new societal situation, incorporating changes in the social system, economics, politics, and culture, made the emergence of the middle class possible and stimulated trade and various brands of entrepreneurship. As a consequence, a new kind of public sphere, not restricted only by heritage, emerged. The new social situation created a need for a new kind of philosophy, because there was no longer a single authority to trust. The novel concept of individuality without a clear authority, and the possibility to prosper by employing one's own skills rather than through heritage, required a civilized person able to make reasoned judgments relying on the information available, as well as taking responsibility for his actions.[104]

The rise of the capitalist market economy, especially in England, created a new middle class that was wealthier and more literate than the lower classes, and not tied to traditional modes of behavior like the aristocracy or clergy. The middle class had spare time, wealth, and an appetite for new experiences; the books and journals, new plays and concerts, as well as art exhibitions and later museums provided these experiences. The wealthiest members of the middle class took the Grand Tour; they traveled to Italy and other Mediterranean destinations to admire Classical and Renaissance art in their original settings. These various new cultural events and experiences provided cultural capital that was valuable in the social competition of the newly formed modern and secular society, where the significance of ancestry was reduced and the importance personal abilities increased.[105]

The art market developed hand in hand with the emergence of new audiences for art – works of art became available through new means of distribution. Literature could be bought or borrowed, paintings and other artworks were sold, not always commissioned, and secular concerts were open to public[106]. The emergence of the art market did not result the total disappearance of the old system of patronage and commissioned artworks, but provided other possibilities for the distribution of art. The new accessibility to art had significant effects on the interpretations of artwork's content and value, and subsequently had effects on the status of artists and the conception of the ideal artist.[107]

The separation of the artist and the craftsman took its first steps in the first half of the eighteenth century, but the most significant development took place from the 1750s onwards. Using Nathalie Heinich's terminology, artists moved from *the regime of artisan craftwork* to *the regime of professional*. In that time, the term *artist* stabilized to indicate firstly a painter, whose work had already transformed into something different from the traditional profession; the new artist had often been educated in one of the recently established art academies instead of a master's workshop, he worked in a studio instead a workshop, and presented his works in exhibitions, selling them through private sales instead working solely from commissions.[108] Later, the use of the term artist expanded to include writers, musicians, architects, etc. Simultaneously, the qualities that were desired in an artisan and in an artist divided even further; the "mechanical" qualities, skill,

101 Shiner 2001, 92-93, 214-217.

102 Shiner 2001, 92, 213.

103 Pearce 1992, 100-101.

104 Mortensen 1997, 72-73,75-77, 79-80.

105 Shiner 2001, 91-92, 94-95. Mortensen1997, 83-84.

106 Public did not include all the people, but a certain cultured public. However, the cultural products and events were more widely available than before.

107 Shiner 2001, 103.

108 Heinich 2012, 698. Danko 2008, 247.

rules, imitation, and service, now applied to the artisan only, whereas the "artistic" qualities, inspiration, imagination, freedom, and genius, were transferred to apply to the new category of artists.[109]

In addition to this separation of artist and artisan, the qualities applied to an artist gained new substance. The term genius begun to indicate someone *being a genius,* instead the previous idea, where everyone *had a genius* for something. It was not possible to become a genius by training in an art; rather, one was born with the genius. The previous understanding of imagination as a general image-storing faculty or a dangerous power of fantasy was replaced by the modern idea of *a creative imagination,* which was seen as the artist's most important attribute. Imagination, in its turn, was closely connected with the idea of *creation*, updated from the previously used invention. The term creation got its new meaning when invention was detached from imitating nature, and creation from its biblical associations. The novel idea of creation was linked to creating order out of the chaos of existing impressions in a spontaneous way. The creation of a genius-artist was expected to be *original*, thus not following any model from the previous masters. Imitation of nature had the potential to be original if the work was executed in an original style, or if nature operated as a source for the *inspiration* of an artist. This new artist also *expressed* his feelings or inner thoughts through his artworks. While the status of the artist and his work were elevated with all these ethereal attributes, the craftsman was left with only mechanical qualities, the routine imitation of past models, service, calculation, and trade, which left no room for higher aspirations.[110]

Taste formed the principal means of making individual evaluations in aesthetic issues. Its use was not confined only to the sphere of art, but incorporated judgments about other topics too. Having good taste also included mastering the right kind of behavior and being able to evaluate the manners of other people. The principles of taste were impossible to verbalize: the exact definition was avoided by saying that things or persons presenting good taste had a *je ne sais quoi* (literally: I don't know what) quality, a French expression referring to something difficult to pin down. Parallel to knowing the quality of taste in one's own clothing and conduct, the excellence in an artwork could be just felt, even though the origin of the sensation was hidden, i.e. *je ne sais quoi*. Because the principles of taste were hidden it was, unlike the later discipline of aesthetics, more dependent on personal views and features: Shiner sees that certain social and mental characteristics were required for having a fine taste.[111]

The emergence of the discipline of aesthetics in the first half of the eighteenth century brought more advanced means for evaluating and assessing art. The development of aesthetic theories made it possible to analyze art beyond the limits of taste, and to distinguish it more clearly as a practice with special contents and clearly separate from other

109 Shiner 2001, 101-103, 105, 106, 108.

110 Shiner 2001, 111-114.

111 Mortensen 1997, 94. Shiner 2001, 140.





human activities. Kristeller describes how the interest in the visual arts and music grew in the early eighteenth century among both amateurs and professional philosophers. Both these disparate groups produced writings and treatises about the qualities of art that finally lead to the emergence of the discipline of aesthetics.[112]

The idea of aesthetics as an independent discipline was first promoted by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, as a science of sensitive cognition.[113] Sensitive cognition was supposed to clarify the character of knowledge accessed through the senses, knowledge that diverged from clear scientific knowledge in the cartesian sense.[114] The main purpose of the discipline was to study perfection in sensuous cognition – beauty.[115] Even though the original scope of aesthetics was wider, Baumgarten already saw art as a significant field for aesthetic study. Later, by the end of the eighteenth century, the discipline of aesthetics turned to the philosophy of art.[116]

According to Shiner, the former concept of taste had been entirely social, and by the eighteenth century had been degraded by its connotations with sensual and bodily aspects, while the new discipline of aesthetics dealt with the more elevated senses of sight and hearing. However, some aspects of taste were preserved in aesthetics, but in a transformed configuration; the ordinary pleasure of beauty was replaced by a special, refined, and intellectualized pleasure, the idea of unprejudiced judgment was transformed into a disinterested contemplation, and the concern with plain beauty was replaced by more defined notions of the sublime and picturesque. The most fundamental difference between the concepts of taste and aesthetics was the idea of a special, refined pleasure received from works of art through aesthetic appreciation, whereas when viewed through taste the pleasure was understood as some sort of controllable preference. Aesthetic pleasure was not instrumental, like the one experienced through taste, but "the object of higher, contemplative pleasure".[117]

The development from taste to aesthetics generated new concepts in order to define the special features used in contemplating art: disinterested contemplation, as well as the notions of the sublime and the picturesque, were all new ideas that were closely tied to the birth of the category of fine art. The concept of disinterested contemplation suggested the contemplation of artworks without a material or personal interest. One should be interested in the artwork only for art's sake. The notions of the sublime and the picturesque pointed to the special qualities of beauty, which helped to define the quality of the artwork. Sublimity had a connection to the new interest in natural landscapes and phenomena that felt overpowering – greater than the human mind could conceive. The picturesque

112 Kristeller 1952,17.

113 Baumgarten 2007 (1750), 11. Also Baumgarten 2009 (1735), 246-247.

114 Beardsley 1982 (1966), 158-159.

115 Baumgarten 2007 (1750), 17, 21.

116 Baumgarten 2007 (1750), 11. Welsch 1997, 78-79.

117 Shiner 2001, 140-141.

was a more limited concept, connected with looking at a landscape, usually one that resembled a certain type of painting or picture.[118]

As a side effect, the emergence of aesthetics also transformed the perception of certain physical practices. The shift in perception was mostly connected to the appreciation of the natural landscapes, especially extreme or outstanding ones, including mountains, coastlines, and waterfalls. High mountains were previously regarded as frightening, even repulsive sights, but now the same emotions were interpreted as sublime. The common feature of the appreciated landscapes was a distant location and the difficulty of reaching the best sites from which to observe them. Thus, the appreciation of landscapes, and especially the wilderness, produced new physical practices; walking, which had served as a mere mode of transportation for the common people or a religious practice in pilgrimages, became a cultural act and a fashionable pastime. Especially new was the urge to travel, and even to make difficult detours to see the wildest sceneries, which were previously thought of as unpleasant if not horrible.[119]

118 Shiner 2001, 140-141, 144-145. Mortensen 1997, 160-161. Gilpin 2008 (1792). Burke 2008 (1757).

119 Solnit 2001, 82-85, 135. Gilpin 2008 (1792).

# The Genesis of Sport

Following the structure of the development of the category of fine art, I have divided the final integration of various physical practices into modern sport into three phases, which are partially overlapping. Eric Dunning suggests that there were two significant spurts in the development of modern sport in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, both taking place in England. In addition to these two phases proposed by Dunning, a third one, featuring the developments in Germany and continental Europe during nineteenth century, is included.[120]

The impetus for the evolution of the early prototypes of modern sport is similar to the birth of the modern concept of art – the differentiation of medieval lifestyles, as well as the social changes that took place in the course of the modernization of society. Norbert Elias and Dunning link the emergence of modern sport closely to the civilizing process and pacification of society. In addition, secularization and industrialization played a role in the development of sport. The emergence of the middle class had a central role in the birth of sport but, unlike in the development of art, the emergence of sport as well as gymnastics had nationalistic features already from the outset.[121]

The development of sport was actually the birth of a novel practice. Generic forms of game-contests have been practiced in all cultures, but their level of organization has been nonexistent, or differed greatly from that of modern sport. The ancient Greeks had a system of sport, but that waned finally after the Roman period. The few somewhat organized physical activities existing in Europe after the classical period were either fully subordinate to high class education, or related to learning and maintaining military skills. The only physical practices that were free from educational purposes were local games and festivals, or the performance of sporadic ad hoc feats. These instances of physical activity later acted as an inspiration for the development of modern sporting events, but unlike modern sport these pre-sport physical practices did not form a coherent, organized system.[122]

120 Dunning 1995, 23.

121 Eichberg 1995 b, 37. Dunning 1995, 22.

## *The Early Development of Sport*

The earliest signs of modern sport first appeared in England. The development of sport is connected with the same changes in British society that drove the growing interest in art and the emergence of the concept of taste described above, however from a different angle.

In consequence of the changes in the governmental system, the national unity of England was quite settled already from the late seventeenth century. The sufficiently stable society advanced the development towards a less violent culture. Elias and Dunning connect the emergence of modern sport in England with the atypically permanent conditions of the society, as well as the civilizing processes spurred by peaceful development. Their vision is that the civilizing process of a society leads to greater self-control and a restraint of the use of violence in resolving conflicts. The English parliamentarian system emphasized a balance between the two houses of the parliament, as well as with the monarch. This novel system of governance accustomed the members of the ruling classes to non-violent changes in governance – they had to learn to give up ruling power to their opponents and take a stance as the opposition. These non-violent changes of power positions increased the security of society, which in turn promoted a more equal society and more freedom for the citizens. The English development was significantly different from that of continental Europe, where governance was more centralized and the citizens' freedom more limited.[123]

According to Elias, the non-violent and open parliamentary contest, combined with the rather democratic composition of the English parliament, lead to social circumstances that were favorable for a pastime devoted to competitive struggles. The new and distinctive feature of the English competitive pastime was their refraining from violent action in their game-contests, or the quest to restrict the inherent violence in activities like boxing, by following mutually accepted rules and the gentlemanly code of conduct. In addition, the national

122 Eichberg 2009, 88.

123 Elias 1986, 28-34. Dunning 1995, 22-23.

unity of England helped to produce nationwide rules for games and competitions. These specialties of English society made the development of sport different from that of their continental counterparts, for example Italian *calsio* stayed a local tradition, while English football – that was codified 1863 – became a worldwide sport.[124]

English society thus created an environment that supported non-violent game-contests as a suitable pastime for the nobility and ruling classes, and the existence of a relatively wealthy middle class with some leisure generated more demand for free time activities. One of the ways to spend leisure time was sport, not in the modern narrow meaning, but as popular game-contests, different races and hunting. The process of industrialization that took place during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced a new working class which, unlike the previous lower classes, had spare time. Even though the spare time was sparse, the idea of leisure was also introduced to the lower classes. While the aristocracy had generated their own types of sporting events, which the middle class partially adopted, the lower classes found and organized their own. Hunting and horse-races were typically upper class sports, while cruder sport amusements like dog- and cockfights were popular in all social classes. The English pre-sport practices in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were primarily practices of watching and consuming sport. Nature sports like hunting, fishing, and mountaineering formed an exception in the early stages of the development of sport.[125]

Betting, which formed an important convention in English sport, was practiced widely in the regularly organized events, like horse races, dog and cock fights, as well as prizefighting. This produced an educated audience that was interested in the results and thus the details of the sport. Regular betting created special knowledge about these sports, which eventually transformed into ranking lists of the competitors. The evaluation of the competitors by their successes led to the early notions of the sport record. However, the ranking lists did not transform into records easily; fights did not produce comparable records, and during the early stages of modern sport the technology was not accurate enough to compare results made in different contests. The invention of a stopwatch in the early eighteenth century made it possible to compare results. However, the importance of sports in the eighteenth century was somewhat different from the later history of sports; the stopwatches were first used for confirm records made in long distance horse races.[126]

Human sports in England developed in the wake of horse races. Social change in England and the rise of the middle class contributed to the development and refinement of sports. For instance, by the end of the seventeenth century, primitive prizefighting developed into a more professional activity and a less lethal entertainment, and from this process the basic practices of boxing were generated. For example, the concept of fighting in rounds, the use of the boxing ring, and the referee were introduced during the eighteenth century.[127] The next development in boxing was a result of a law reform and social change; the aristocratic duel was banned and became unfashionable in England. Fists became the gentleman's means of defending one's honor. The upper and middle class adoption of boxing integrated gentlemanly behavior with the lower class amusement of prize fighting. The boxer's posture changed from bent to upright, and the use of padded gloves became the norm. An important part of this civilizing process of boxing was introducing the idea of fairness into the fights. Dirty tricks were already banned at an earlier time, but now the aim was not to harm the opponent but to defeat him, complying with the rules and codes of boxing.[128]

Before the eighteenth century, distance running was mainly work for professional messengers or so called footmen, who ran alongside the coaches of the upper class. There were formal footraces in England from the late seventeenth century onwards, which can be seen as a primitive form of modern distance running. Most of these races were arranged between professional footmen, but specialized show runners and walkers also performed in various places around Europe. They earned their living by collecting money from audience in exchange for promising to perform extraordinary feats, for instance running and walking (extremely) long distances. To make the feat more interesting for the paying public, part of the distance was sometimes run backwards or on stilts. Another kind of pre-sport running competition were the various carnivalesque races, where lightly dressed women ran for a prize, or an otherwise normal running race could be spiced up by adding wheelbarrows to it, or converting the race into a sack race.[129]

The early carnivalesque races were still seen as precursors to modern sport at the end of the nineteenth century, when Danish sportsmen considered the possibility of including events like the sack-race, or race with a bucket balanced on top of the competitors' heads, as a part of modern sport.[130] Already in these early footraces, the difference between running and walking was distinguished. In addition to these first organized races for the greater public, there were occasional gentlemanly running stunts, usually resulting from a bet. These stunts were usually attempts to accomplish a certain distance in a promised time, but known examples of these stunts include eccentricities like a naked run around St. James' park in London. However, these running stunts were the first instances of the changing idea of running, introducing the gentleman pedestrians alongside

124 Elias 1986, 28-34, 37. Dunning 1995, 22-23. Dunning 1999, 73.

125 Dunning 1995, 23. Mandell 1984, 136, 151-153.

126 Mandell 1984, 140-141, 144, 146. Gotaas 2009, 71.Eichberg 1982, 46.

127 Dunning 1999, 57 ("Broughton's Rules", dated 16.8.1743).

128 Mandell 1984, 148-150. Elias 1986, 21. Dunning 1999, 56-60.

129 Mandell 1984, 145. Eichberg 1998, 152.

130 Eichberg 1998, 149.

the gentleman boxers.[131] In spite of the superficial similarities, the early footraces differed significantly from modern sport. The ideas of achievement and records that characterize modern sport did not play an important role in these competitions. Instead of a measurable quantitative result, the interest focused on the spectacle of the race and the person of the winner.[132]

To some degree, the early enthusiasm for pedestrianism in England stemmed from the recently popularized practice of appreciation of impressive natural landscapes, which was a middle class extension of aristocratic walks in the garden. Reaching these scenic landscapes, as well as finding the best view of them, incorporated walking in nature. At first this walking was restricted to the site of the view, but later, in the early nineteenth century, traveling to the site on foot or taking a scenic route through nature became an important part of this practice. The practice thus had an aesthetic origin, but it habituated the middle class to appreciate traveling over distances by walking – even when it was not absolutely necessary.[133]

## *The Case of Gymnastics*

Alongside English sports, another type of physical culture developed in continental Europe. Gymnastics originated from Enlightenment ideas about children's education. Unlike English sport, which developed from traditional game-contests, gymnastics had an intellectual background; German Enlightenment educators Johann Bernhard Basedow and Johann Friedrich Guts Muths believed in physical exercise as an important part of a complete education, in addition to theoretical subjects. In contrast with the early English sports, the practice of gymnastics concentrated mostly on participation, and thus functioned as a predecessor of modern exercise and fitness practices where the main objective is to promote one's health instead of competing for success. The idea of physical exercises as a part of education was first tested in 1770s by Basedow in the school he founded in Dessau, called the *Philanthropinum*. The idea behind this physical education program was to introduce regular gymnastic exercises into the school curriculum, so that the physical activity would assist the schoolchildren to work efficiently in the other parts of their studies. At first the exercises consisted of variants of traditional games and free play in the open air, but soon the traditional games and playing were partially replaced by formalized exercises, often executed on specially designed equipment, for instance horizontal bars, parallel bars, and vaulting and climbing equipment. The ideal surrounding for gymnastic exercises was an open air gymnasium surrounded by trees, which included a playground for free play in addition to the equipment for more organized exercises. The gymnastic exercises were performed regularly at certain times and places, and were carefully taught in order to ensure their effect and the pupils' progress. A new aspect of gymnastics was the idea of rationalized exercises, where the progress of the performances was measured and the pupils were ranked according to their performances and progress.[134]

The expansion of gymnastic outside school curricula took place in Germany, where Friedrich Ludwig Jahn introduced his idea of a gymnastic program, *Turnen*, that combined physical exercises with German nationalistic spirit. Jahn's movement, *Turnbewegung,* evolved into a highly organized practice, with local clubs and dedicated exercise fields, *Turnplätze*, being founded around Germany and organized inregular meetings, *Turntage*. During the course of the nineteenth century, gymnastic programs inspired by Jahn's Turnen developed into various local and national versions, and became widely popular around continental Europe. Local versions of gymnastics were established, for instance, in Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Netherlands, parts of Russia, the Austro-Hungarian empire, and Bohemia[135]. In addition to these geographically centered national gymnastic movements, a Jewish gymnastic movement was established in Germany, which spread around Europe in several countries. The expansion of the gymnastic movement in its numerous forms began in the early eighteenth century and continued throughout the century. In continental Europe and Scandinavia, gymnastics formed the first somewhat coherent physical culture since the antiquity. The popularity of gymnastics lasted until the end of the nineteenth century, when the English fashion of sport took over and became the dominant physical culture. Although gymnastics was eventually eclipsed by sport, and it lost much of its significance as a physical culture, its organization formed a foundation for the organization of modern sport, and many of the gymnastic exercises were transformed into sporting events.[136]

The objective in gymnastics was rational; the central aspiration of gymnastics was to achieve a healthier and stronger body through organized and rationalized exercises. In contrast to modern sport, the idea of gymnastics was to pursue general fitness instead of excellence in specialized events. This objective was executed through regular and varying exercises that followed a meticulously chosen gymnastics program. The training was extremely systematic, and every aspect of the exercises was instructed: the regular times for training, the times an exercise should be repeated, the exact length of the exercise in time, and the posture and manner of executing the movements or maneuvers. The variety of gymnastics exercises included maneuvers that did not require special equipment, for instance standing on one foot, making somersaults, stretching, and running, in addition to maneuvers that utilized simple equipment like horizontal bars or weights, or even more complicated apparatus like the parallel bars or the pommel horse. The exercises could be performed alone or in a group. In the latter case, the movements were

131 Mandell 1984, 141-142. Bale 2004, 34. Gotaas 2009, 14. Eichberg 1982, 45.

132 Eichberg 1982, p.46.

133 Solnit 2001, 87, 91, 93, 96.

134 Mandell 1984, 159,161. Eichberg 1998, 47, 52-54.

135 Part of Germany in the nineteenth century, today parts of the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

136 Mandell 1984, 164, 168, 170, 173, 174. Dunning 1995, 22.

executed in unison. The detailed instructions about the scheduling of the exercises, as well as the manner of executing the movements, varied depending on the variant of gymnastics practiced.[137]

Running in the context of gymnastic diverged from both pre-sport running as well as running in modern sport. As the idea of quantitative achievement was absent in gymnastics, the running exercises had a different emphasis. Running a certain distance was not the only option, and instead running could be performed for a certain time or a certain amount of steps. A Finnish handbook of gymnastics by Karl Gustaf Göös gives some examples of how meticulously a running exercise should be executed; Göös gives exact advice on how the body should lean forward, and how the arms should be bent and moved. For instance, running should start with left foot if not otherwise instructed. In addition, various types of running were distinguished; the objective of *lyhyt-juoksu* (short running) was beautiful and elastic running. The steps were performed on the ball of the foot and were kept short. One should keep up 160 steps per minute for a maximum time of three minutes. *Lyhyt-juoksu* could be performed in- or outdoors, running in different patterns, and also stationary. *Nopea-juoksu* (quick running) was closer to the modern (sport) idea of running. In this practice, two gymnasts ran back and forth in a field, and the first reaching back to the starting line was the winner. *Nopea-juoksu* was performed outdoors only. Another Finnish advocate of gymnastics, Viktor Heikel, also collected instructions for running. His directions indicate that the runner's head should be upright, and his chest pushed forward. One should keep his mouth shut and breathe only through his nose, in order to prevent cold or dusty air from harming the lungs. He introduces one more running exercise, where one bends his legs so that the heels touch the buttocks with every step. Heikel's gymnastic practices also included a type of running where the gymnast carries an iron bar similar to the one used in Jahn's Turnen, and shifts its position for each running section. In comparison with today's running, gymnastic running was utterly classified and organized in detail. However, the early running styles in modern sport carry some signs of gymnastic running, for example Hannes Kolehmainen, four-time Olympic winner in distance running, advocated breathing through the nose.[138]

Even though the results of gymnastic training were sometimes measured and timed in order to track an individual's progress[139], the gymnasts' gatherings were more performances than competitions.[140] However, these gymnastic meetings have an important role as the predecessor of sport competitions, as the number of participants in the meetings grew. The great gymnastic meetings with their numerous attendees were the largest athletic gatherings during the nineteenth century, which were not exceeded until the final rise of the modern Olympic Games in the twentieth century.[141]

The evolution of the technical equipment used for these exercises continued throughout the dominant period of gymnastics. In addition to the specialized spaces reserved for exercises only, gymnastic exercises were intensified by the use of various equipment. There were simple accessories like the iron bar that was used as a supplementary weight in various movements, as well as more complicated apparatus, from the horizontal bar to ladders for climbing and a *bock*[142] for jumping over. Already in 1816 Jahn had suggested several types of equipment: "*Springel* (for high jumps and pole vaulting), vaulting poles, a trench to be jumped over, four horizontal bars, four parallel bars, four *Schwingel* (wooden vaulting horses), another suspended horizontal bar, a post and javelins, a towing rope, a rope for tug'o'war and other rope exercises, short ropes, two ropes for climbing, two climbing poles and a ladder" were considered necessary for 80 gymnasts. The use of specialized equipment formed a continuation and intensification of the already organized system of exercising that gymnastics had established.[143]

### *The Transition to Modern Sport*

The concept of modern sport developed within a reasonable short period of time in English boarding schools and universities. Physical education in early eighteenth century England took a unique direction that emphasized competition between the students. The practice of competitive sporting events became epidemic in English schools and universities, and the contests between schools and intercollegiate competitions soon adopted standardized rules in order to compare results.[144] The codification of sport had begun already when prizefighting was transformed into boxing; the second step was taken in the early nineteenth century, when the rules of rugby were fixed in written form in 1846. These generally accepted rules, which were available in written form, finally made it possible to develop a coherent sport where the matches could be compared, and where the superiority of the winning team could be ensured. In addition, technological developments made it possible to measure records with adequate accuracy. By the end of the nineteenth century, stop-watches that were capable of measuring time down to parts of a second became affordable enough to be used even in local sporting contests. Although the basic codification of sport was thus introduced fully by the mid-eighteenth century, it continued to develop over the course of the century and beyond. For example, the familiar 400-meter oval running track became the standard no

137 Vettenniemi 2006, 111-112, 117-120. Mandell 1984, 159-162.

138 Vettenniemi 2006, 112-113, 116-117. Finnish variant of gymnastics was based on the German and Swedish gymnastic programs. Also Eichberg 1998, 152.

139 Mandell 1984, 161.

140 Mandell 1984, 168.

141 According to Deutscher Turner-Bund (http://www. dtb-online.de), the Turnfests during the latter half of nineteenth century had thousands of participants, and for instance the Deutches Turnfest in Münich 1889 totaled 20 000 gymnasts.

142 A simple precursor of the "horse" and the contemporary vaulting table used in various jumps.

143 Eichberg 1982, 49.

144 Eichberg 1982, 46. Mandell 1984, 154-155.

earlier than the Amsterdam Olympics of 1928.[145]

A tendency to standardize sporting events had existed previously in various places, but the final reason for the adoption of universal rules was the need for keeping comparable records. The first impulse towards the codification of sports was a part of the civilizing process of game-contests. The codification of game-contests began with an attempt to make them less dangerous by forbidding the most extreme behavior.[146] During the second phase of the development of modern sport, the example of the growth and modernization of industry formed an implicit force behind the codification and regularization of sports; industrial work rationalized previously naturally organized work according to new principles. Work became quantified and measured by achievement and time. Where time had previously been considered continuous, it was now divided into time for work and time for rest. Furthermore, the space for work became separated from the spaces used for everyday life. The organization of sport followed the structure of industrialized work; striving for an achievement in limited time and space became the main principle of modern sport.[147]

Completing a run in the first place had always been the objective of pre-sport game-contests, but completing a run with a record time formed a new type of concrete, measurable achievement. Trying to improve one's achievement contributed to the idea of an abstract record, unlike previous ranking lists that merely arranged the competitors in order of relative success. The concepts of a competition, an achievement, and a record, completed within fixed rules and according to the idea of fair play, developed over a hundred-year time span from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, formed the foundation for modern sport, and decisively separated it from all previous physical cultures.

The regularization of sporting events was concluded by transforming them into quantified, transferable abstractions; omitting the sacks and water buckets from running and other carnivalesque features, the element of luck and coincidence, as well as the play element, were excluded from the competition, transforming it into a rational, abstract, and objective practice. The modern running space formed a straight line, where boundaries between lanes separated the runners. Running events were no longer set up between locally known landmarks, but for exact distances, so the absolute results between different races could be compared. In addition to the spatial features of sporting events, the equipment used in field sports was standardized. In pre-sport competitions, the objects thrown or tossed were stones and logs varying in weight.[148]

Although the elite universities played a key role in developing sport in England, the taste for sports quickly expanded to the working class. Mandell suggests that the reason behind this was the novelty of new sports; they were without tradition and thus classless. The popularity of sports among the lower classes led to conflicts where the amateur regulations were used against the work-hardened working class athletes.[149] The original idea of amateur sport was the feature that finally separated the pre-sport game-contest practices from modern sport. Previously, physical activities outside regular work had been local folk games and contests, light exercises for the upper classes, or the professional athlete's feats, but now these were combined into regular training and competition without monetary prizes.

By the end of the nineteenth century all seven of the features Guttmann used for separating modern sport from previous physical cultures had emerged. English sport had already become secular during the first phase of its development; the equality of opportunities to compete and equality in the conditions of competition were introduced in eighteenth century; at the same time the idea of fairness was connected to physical contents; the specialization of roles emerged at the latest with the rules of boxing; the rationalization of physical practices took place during the nineteenth century with the standardization of sporting events as well as the quantification and the quest for records; and the modern bureaucratic organization concluded the shift to modern sport during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

145 Mandell 1984, 156. Eichberg 1982, 46. Bale 2004, 47.

146 Dunning 1999, 50.

147 Eichberg 1998, 143.

148 Eichberg 1998, 149-151. Mandell 1984, 151-152. Guttmann 1978, 15-55 passim. Huizinga 1971, 13.

149 Mandell 1984, 153.





# The Further Refinement of Art and Sport

When the practices of art and sport stabilized in the 1830s (art) and 1900 (sport), there was still plenty of development ahead before the practices reached their maturity.[150] Both practices emerged in the course of the general differentiation of human activities since the Middle ages; in a process where activities that had been in a conjoined state started to find a new order in a more categorized system. Although most human activities had found their definitive places in the new system, their internal refinement as well as the development of associated institutions continued. Using Kuhn's terminology, the paradigm shift was over, and the normal practices were working according to the newly imposed rules in order to purify each practice to its apex.

In spite of the different time frames in the development of art and sport, the formation of the institutional structures was surprisingly similar. Both practices needed spaces and facilities: places to perform and exhibit, spaces for artistic work and athletes' exercise, and both practices needed special equipment and materials. These are the most obvious material needs. These material requirements were arranged in various ways in both practices. Private collectors and enthusiasts supported the new facilities, and educational

150 Shiner 2001, 218.

systems found uses for both art and sport and thus supported them. However, the institutional and material development of art and sport was not unique: similar differentiations of practices during the modernization of European culture produced institutions of new kind in several newly established practices (science, medicine, technology, media...) as well as specialized equipment, most notably in the field of sciences.

Both art and sport became widely supported by the states, for both were already seen in their early stages as potential fields for displaying a nation's excellence. For instance, in Finland sport was used to create nationalistic feelings: in the Stockholm Olympic Games of 1912, Finland presented as an independent team even though it was not an independent nation.[151] The use of art for nationalistic ends was similar to how sport was used; Finland exhibited in its own pavilion at the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris, even though it was still a part of the Russian Empire. The Finnish exhibition emphasized the status of Finns as a culturally unique nation through the means of art. The Finnish pavilion was designed by Armas Lindgren, Herman Gesellius, and Eliel Saarinen, and decorated in national romantic style by Akseli Gallen-Kallela, who was the most prosperous Finnish artist that time. Art was used to make a statement about an autonomous and unique Finnish culture, even though such a nation did not exist yet.[152]

The process of refinement of the systems of art and sport consisted of further defining the specific arts and sports that should be included in the practices. The evolution of the practices took place mainly through the expansion of the original set of arts and sports by assimilation, but also excluding practices. Some practices occupied a gray area, almost becoming art or sport, but never being accepted as a part of the systems. For example, landscape gardening ceased to be considered as an art at quite an early phase, and dance was adopted into the group of arts. Part of the practice of photography was transformed into art by assimilation at a rather early stage, by the end of the nineteenth century, but becoming accepted as a central medium of the visual arts took several decades.[153] In a similar way, the original formation of sport already excluded popular game-contests like sack races or man versus horse running races, but tug-of-war was included in sports until the Stockholm Olympics of 1912. Parts of gymnastics were assimilated into sports by *sportification*; an evaluation system for the difficulty and perfection of individual exercises was added to the gymnastic performances, and thus transformed what were previously exercises into sports. Bodybuilding, in turn, was once included in official sports, but later moved away from sport because of its attitude towards the use of performance enhancing chemicals considered as illegal doping in the sports system. The gradual transformation of the practices did not obscure the boundaries of art and sport; moreover, the changes clarified the practices.[154]

The original visual arts extended their expressive possibilities by stretching the limits of their individual media. For instance, the possibilities of painting were extended firstly through introducing different painting styles, which either tried to present the world in a new perspective (impressionism) or tried to picture the parts of the world that cannot be visually perceived (expressionism and abstract painting). Another way of extending the possibilities of the field of visual arts was to abandon the orthodox use of artistic media and introduce traces of everyday life into the artwork. Picasso and Braque applied this method in their cubistic experiments by using the collage technique, thus breaking the illusion of painting as a window to the world. Similarly, sculpture replaced the material purity of stone and bronze by using all kinds of materials, in order to produce works that would not reproduce objects already existing in world, but rather produce new views of the world.

In addition to the expansion of the field of arts and the extension of the limits of artistic possibilities, the maturation of arts is visible in the formation of several movements that emphasized various approaches to art, or different styles in executing artworks. The two main lines that can be seen in early twentieth century art movements are expressionism and formalism. The former emphasized the arts' (and artists') ability to express feelings through art, and the latter concentrated on the method or style of executing the artwork. Later, this bisection was completed by anti-art movements that rose up against art's original quest for beauty, the sublime, and transcendent utopias. Art's division into various movements began in the late nineteenth century, and culminated on both sides around the First World War, when cubism (around 1910), Dadaism (1916), surrealism (early 1920s), and futurism (1909) all introduced their artistic programs. The previous domains of the visual arts (painting, sculpture, and architecture) were divided into numerous movements that had their own distinctive ideas about each medium of the visual arts, and often about literature, music, and dance as well.[155]

The first period of maturity in sport can be situated during the years between the First and Second World Wars, when the Olympic movement and Olympic Games had been rooted firmly in western culture. The building of special spaces for practicing sports exemplifies its importance at the time; the first Olympic Stadium was built for the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm, and after that sport stadiums became places where the art of architecture was combined with sport performances, and provided sport a place separated from everyday life. The spectators were also separated from the athletes in a similar manner as the theater and concert audiences were separated from the performers.[156]

During this period, sport meant exclusively competitive achievement sport, i.e. sport in its purest form. Even though

151 Laine 1992 a, 126. Viita 2003, 152-153

152 Sevänen 1998, 278, 302. Viita 2003, 158-160. Fredrikson 2001, 20, 24, 26, 40.

153 Shiner 2001, 226, 230-233, 282.

154 Eichberg 1995 b, 31. Yttegren and Bolling 2012, 10, 20. Kinnunen 2001, 48,95.

155 Shiner 2001, 228.

156 Bale 2004, 52. Eichberg 1998, 57-58.

sport was already a popular pastime, the objectives of sport were in the competitions, and achieving quantified results in a standardized environment. This concentration on achievement produced a sports culture that was significantly different from our contemporary ideas. For instance, practicing sport was confined to the specialized sport fields. Several sources describe how distance runners were ridiculed if they exercised in public, outside the running track, and for this reason they often walked outside densely populated areas in their everyday clothing before setting out for a run.[157] This was also the time when the idea of the amateur athlete existed in its most authentic form. For instance, Paavo Nurmi, a nine-time Olympic champion, was rejected from the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles because his amateur status was suspect.[158] However, the idea of amateurism did not apply the professionals supporting athletes or working for the sport bureaucracy.

Once the artist was separated from the craftsman, the perception of his qualities shifted too. In the first phase, the artist's profession preserved a hierarchical organization that somewhat resembled the previous guild system, and opposed the later ideas of what an artist should be. The education in art academies concentrated on the artist's skills in drawing and using color, as well as designing and executing paintings according to predefined rules that followed classical models. Even the subjects of artworks were set in a hierarchical order. There was hardly any room for the freedom of expression that later characterizes artists and their work.[159]

Many of the qualities that define the artist and her role in today's culture were formed already in the late nineteenth century. Imagination and creativity already took their place as artist's attributes during the early stages of art's separation into an independent practice. During the course of the nineteenth century more elevated qualities were added. Heinich sees that in the early stages of the second system of arts, artists educated in an art academy belonged to *the regime of professional,* but during the nineteenth century the artist's status was transformed further – in Heinich's words into *the regime of the vocational.* The artist became a person with a special kind of creativity and a higher calling for art. His devotion to art was much more demanding than that required in a normal profession.[160]

The artist's destiny was to suffer for his art; art was surpassed by nothing. To be a real artist was to be a genius that lived for his art, and used all his powers to produce artworks that uncovered his imagination, creativity, and capability for self-expression. Real artists abandoned the approved rules in order to employ their individual sensitivity for creating unique artworks.[161]

In addition to this devotion to his work, freedom as an artist's quality was already emphasized during the early stages of the development of his image. The declaration of independence from surrounding values and ethics became determined, even though most artists' income was dependent on success in the art market. If an artist was not (financially) successful, he could always turn this into a success by appealing to the idea that spirit was more important than money.[162]

The ideal features of an artist were further divided into subcategories that defined an artist's disposition more carefully. Some of these subcategories enjoyed a short period of popularity, but some have endured as a part of artist's image until today. One of the nineteenth century's artistic stereotypes was the dandy, who distinguished himself from the common people by refined outfits and gestures. In real life, most dandies were not productive artists, but concentrated on the presentation of themselves, turning their lives into artworks.[163] Another archetype was the bohemian, who disregarded the middle-class norms, especially those pertaining to behavior and morality. On the other hand, the practices of many artists drew close to those of the artisans. These artists did not perform with flamboyant, expressive artistic freedom, but strove for perfection in their art. Instead of underlining their artistic personality, they concentrated on the end products of their artist's vocation, while still dedicating their lives to art.[164]

Despite the emphasis on freedom, nineteenth century artists were dependent on many social institutions, both official and informal. These institutions were (and are) connected with the process of becoming an artist, earning one's living as an artist, and gaining artistic fame. An aspiring artist needed education, buyers or institutional support, and places to exhibit his art in order to be considered worthy as an artist.[165]

The images of an alienated artist working only for art's sake, suffering from the "curse of genius"[166] , and the idea of the creative and original artist misunderstood by the great audience is so powerful that it conceals the fact that most artists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – and even more so today – had a normal professional status and were socially respected people. For instance, Howard Becker describes how regularly an artist can work regardless of any inspiration. The steady working schedule helps to produce works with a consistent artistic quality, even though this everyday practice of working is totally inartistic according to the ideals inherited from the nineteenth century.[167]

While the dandy and bohemian were rather superficial and brief examples of the nineteenth century statements on artistic freedom, the more universal stereotypes of an artist, as a rebel and a sufferer, can still be found among contemporary artists. Surprisingly, these (self) images of an artist were not affected by subsequent changes in art style or period. The permanence of these ideals exemplifies the special and honorific status artists

157 Bale 2004, 16, 48-49. Vettenniemi 2006, 158-164.

158 Yttegren 2006.

159 Walsh 1999, 234-236,243

160 Heinich 2012, 698. Heinich 2009, 88. Danko 2008, 247.

161 Barker, Webb, and Woods 1999, 9. Walsh 1999, 243.

162 Shiner 2001, 115, 201,203.

163 Garelick 1998, 28.

164 Shiner 2001, 201, 203, 205.

165 Wolff 1994 (1981), 40-47.

166 Shiner 2001, 203.

167 Becker 2008 (1982), 18. Shiner 2001, 201, 203.

achieved during the nineteenth century.

The athlete was a new type of character in nineteenth century society, without historical exemplars like the artist. Practicing physical activities brought together people from all walks of life. Naturally, groups practicing together – both in sport and gymnastics – were segregated according to social groups and/or ethnicity and/or nationality, but in sport competitions the boundaries between these groups were lowered, if not eliminated. In athletic meetings, the measurable result or skill of performance was the yardstick for ranking, not social background. In contrast to the artist, an athlete had a less pronounced figure; his personal qualities needed no exaggeration, as the results spoke instead for the personality. The archetypal athlete finds his form in the early twentieth century, and remained unaltered until the late twentieth century. The rise of professional sports in the late twentieth century brought new kinds of athletes into public knowledge. A successful professional athlete needed the personality as much as the results.[168]

Unlike artists, the qualities of an athlete were defined by the sport authorities and the audience. While artists actively build up their ideal qualities and position in society, athletes were more the subjects in the formation of their public image. The sport audience wanted to see them as heroes; they were seen as good, hard working citizens, presenting a natural talent that had been purified by exercises. The ideal of amateur sport made the successful athletes, who spend their leisure training for their sport – and for their nation – idealistic figures, pure and truthful. Their private personalities did not come in view. Athletes conformed to the purified public image and took advantage of it by appearing in commercials. The ideal of an amateur athlete did not prevent athletes from employing their fame commercially. Occasionally, the athlete was certainly used to promote various interests that were sometimes in conflict with the athlete's preferences and remote from the ideals of sport. For instance, the four-time Olympic champion Hannes Kolehmainen was exploited in the marketing of cigarettes, even though he strongly opposed the habit.[169]

The boundaries between different arts became higher as modernism took over as the primary art movement. The quest for purity within the medium became an essential approach in art. In visual arts, this tendency is best exemplified in painting. American art critic Clement Greenberg formulated the essence of modernism as eliminating imitation, especially of literary material, from the plastic arts. Presenting the world outside painting was not relevant, according to the ideals of modernist style. Greenberg's idea was that by concentrating on the internal aspects of the discipline, painting reinforces itself as art. For this reason an ideal modernist painting had a flat picture space, with no effort to achieve the three dimensional space or perspective that had been seen as characteristic of the medium of painting. Instead, the visible indications of the painting process, which have been faded from view in the nineteenth century, became significant as traces of the painting process. The painter was supposed to concentrate purely on the act of painting, which became the subject of the work. Art in modernism transformed into a dissimilar – even unrecognizable – form when compared with previous art; however, the conception of art still remained the same, and along with it the artist's status, the idea of artwork, the modes of presentation, as well as the aesthetic modes of reception of art.[170]

Even though sport in the early twentieth century emphasized the independence of sporting events in a similar way to the mediums of art at the time, it did not transform away from the organization that developed at the beginning of the century. Instead, sport reinforced the prevailing system through an internationally controlled bureaucracy and later through the global expansion of sport practice.

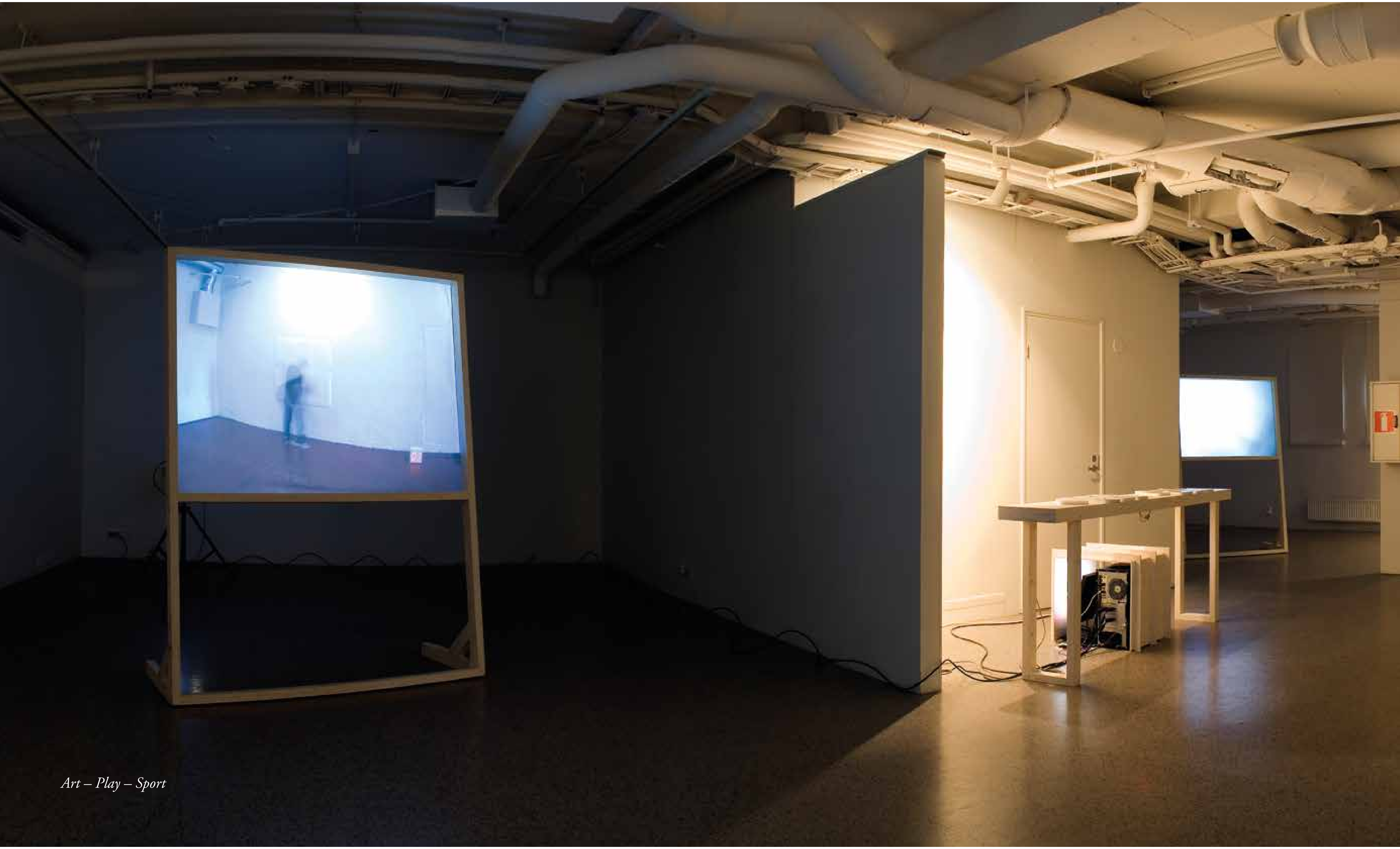
168 Welsch 2005, 136-137.

169 Viita 2003, 227, 304-305, 307-308, 336, 380.

170 Greenberg 2005 b (1940), 562-563.



# 4 • The Diverse Field In-Between

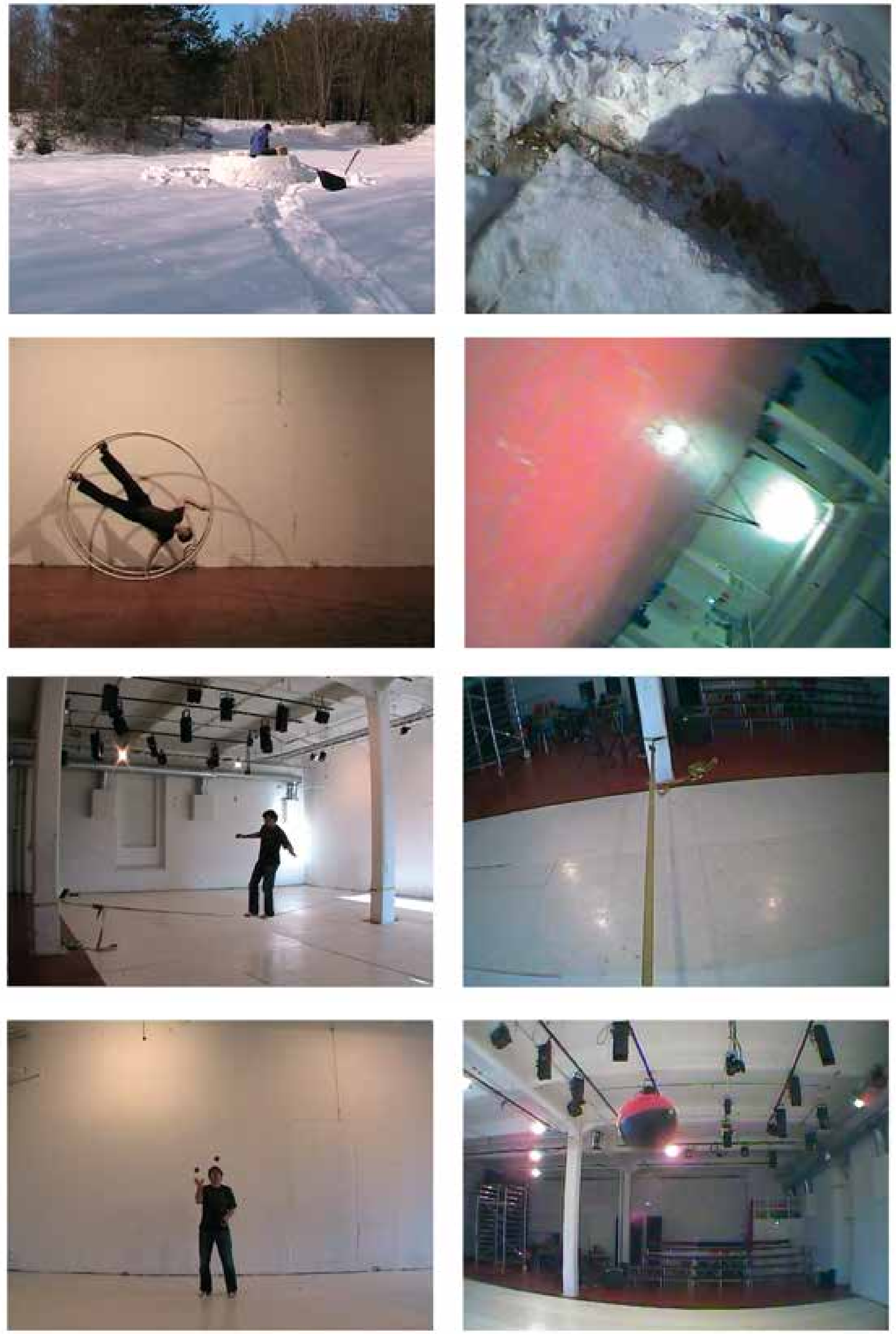

Art – Play – Sport



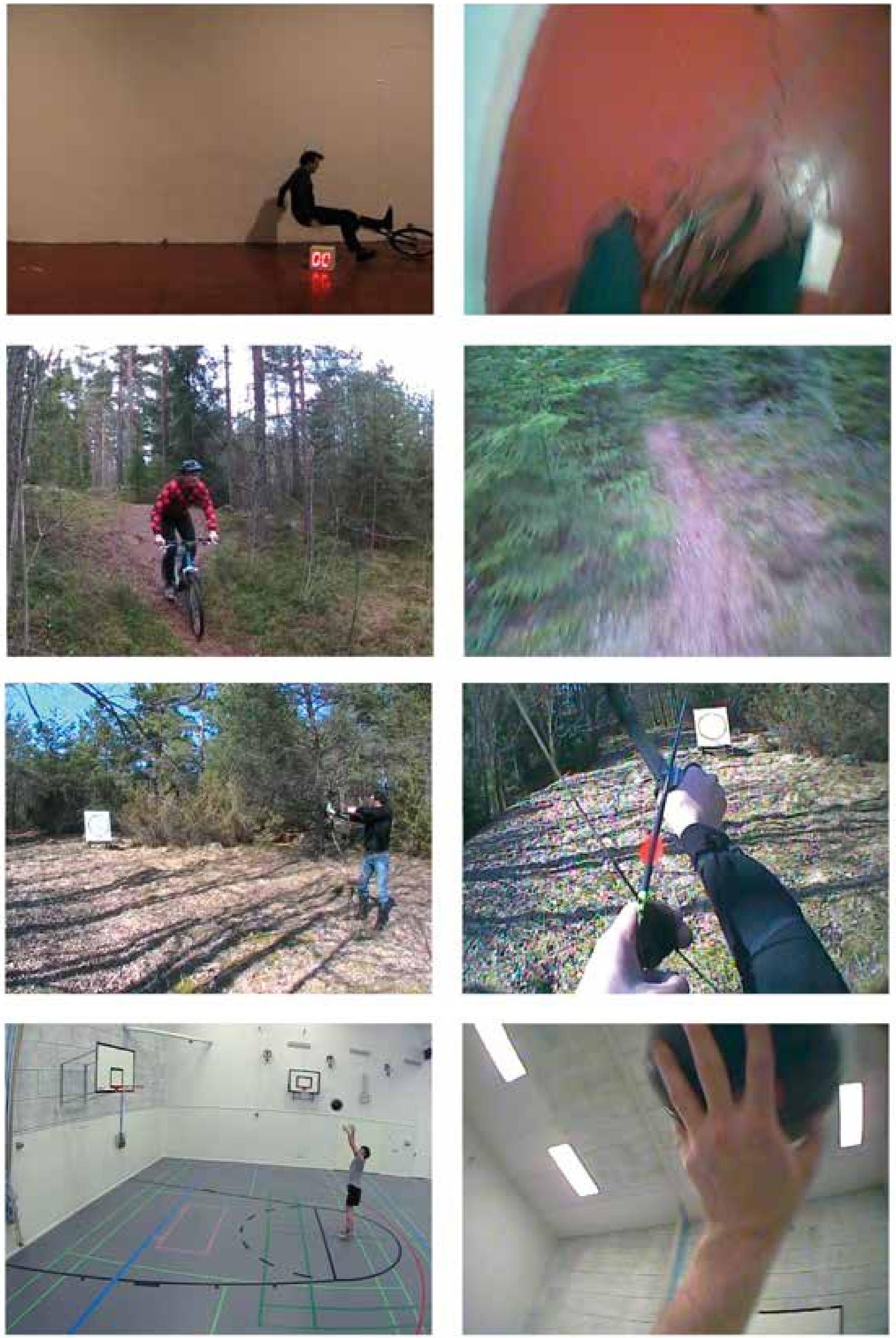

*Art – Play – Sport (detail)*



*Skull, Black Square, Perfect Circle, Step Piece*



*Igloo, Rhoenrad, Slackline, Juggler*



*Unicycle, Mountain Biking, Archery, Basketball*

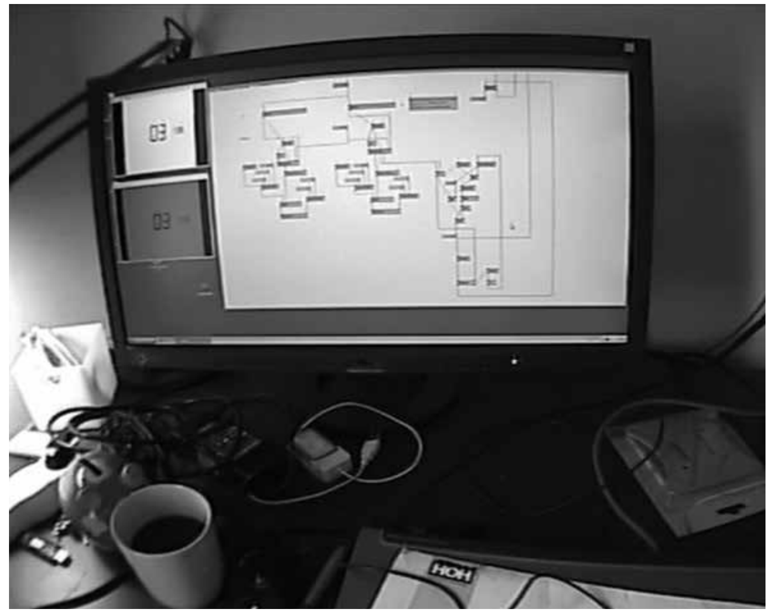




*Stationary Trainer, Cooper Test*



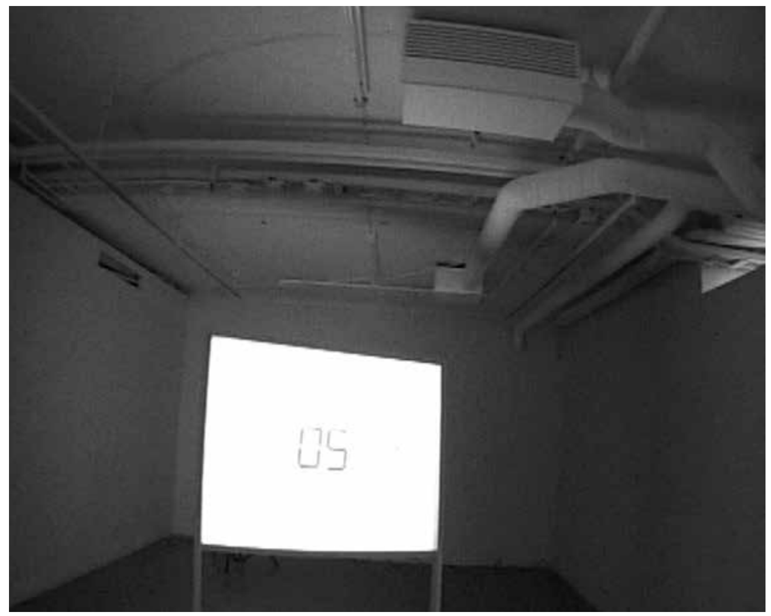
*Reality*




*Reality*



*Visitor*




*Visitor*





After investigating how the historical development of art and sport resemble each other, I realized that it would be interesting to explore how the acts and practices within contemporary art and sport either depart from each other or resemble each other. Moreover, what new kind of practices could be situated in the field between art and sport? My second artistic project was inspired by ideas awoken by the historical similarity of art and sport, and the possibilities created by their intertwining today.

This vantage point, the comparison of the differences and similarities between the contemporary forms of art and sport, became the main theme of the second art project. Some sub-themes soon surfaced; the parallel experiences of the active participants in both practices, as well as the polarity of the participant and the perceiver, were the two most important ones.

I approached the similarities and differences between art and sport by inspecting their core acts – trying to find the significant features of the artist's and the athlete's practices. For instance, drawing and painting form core acts in art, just as running, throwing objects, and ball games are core acts in sport. I first focused on the traditional or conventional contents of the practices, but in addition tried to find the means for tracing the active participant's unique experience in certain acts. The extent to which the active participant's experience could be conveyed to an individual perceiver formed one of the central artistic problems in the project. I needed to find an approach to art and sport that would give the perceiver in the exhibition the opportunity to share my view of the analogies between the practices. My perspective on art and sport as parallel cultural practices is a constructed view, set up especially for the art project and the research project. However, I also wished to promote the benefits of this view through the art project.

I started to construct artworks that would be based on a collection of various acts typical to art and sport, as well as the field between them. All the acts would be presented from the usual onlooker's point of view, as well as from that of the active artist or athlete. The two versions of the acts should be visible simultaneously, so that the perceiver could alternate between them by just turning her eyes. I would try to complete various acts, record my attempts, and present the recordings as the result of my laboratory work. The presentation of the artworks in the exhibition should be designed to support this conception: the visual presentation of the acts needed to be as plain as possible. I tried to avoid "artistic"

filters while constructing my work, to just show the bare acts without any enhancement or decoration. My objective was to record and present the acts faithfully, trying to preserve the atmosphere of the original setting, and so documenting them with video seemed to be the best solution. Even though the moving image on a video does not convey bodily experience, which was significant in my case, it can represent the visual perception of acts reasonably faithfully.

The outlines of the artistic work were set beforehand, with the intention being to clean up the process that led to the finished artworks. Deciding some goals for the project, and setting up a few criteria to limit the working process and the materials used, left me more time and energy to concentrate on the most important factor, the content of the artworks.

At this point, at the outset of the second art project, I wanted to see the artistic projects as a test-site, where ideas concerning my research topics would be tested. The artistic process produces ideas and knowledge based on my recent academic interests. The ideas and knowledge obtained in the art project would be utilized in the research, both in the written part as well as the next art project. The nature of the knowledge gained is such that it would not necessarily be possible to present it in the exhibition, but it would be visible in the upcoming part of research. The part of artistic work that provides for the research can be found in the choices made during the artistic work, in the conceptualizing and planning of the contents of the artworks, as well as constructing the finished works. The path traveled from the original ideas to the exhibition during the art project benefits the research as a whole. In the exhibition, the visitor faces the same questions I had confronted during the artistic process, but without the same preliminary understanding.

The project produced three artworks that were presented in an exhibition at Gallery Sinne in Helsinki. One of the artworks, *Art – Play – Sport*, formed the foundation for the exhibition, dealing most faithfully with the subject matter of the art project. Two other artworks in the exhibition provided further comments and other points of view on the central artwork, as well as the theme of the project in general.

## Art – Play – Sport

The video installation *Art – Play – Sport* became the central work in the art project. The installation consisted of fourteen video recordings about actions that introduced some possibilities for connecting art and sport through physical activity. *Art – Play – Sport* presented all the foundational ideas I had for the exhibition in a focused manner. At the center of the work were documented acts situated in and between the fields of art and sport, as seen from two viewpoints: that of an anonymous perceiver's and that of the active participant's. In the final video installation, the array of chosen acts was projected simultaneously onto two screens, thus juxtaposing the two different views. In addition to the immediate evaluation of the various acts presented on the videos, another level of communication was present; through prolonged attention, the set of videos will gradually place art and sport in relation to each other.

The conceptualization of the work began with a fairly limited concept. At first, I wanted to make the presentation of the tasks as minimal as possible, to isolate them from reality by using the bare white hall in a local dance theater as my studio. The intention was to create a laboratory-like environment, where all the tasks could be recorded and later compared under similar circumstances. As the project advanced, this narrow concept became too limiting, and I ended up recording some of the videos in other environments.

In order to make the videos coherent, I performed all the tasks, and the array reflects the limits of my abilities. The artistic tasks had no real connection to my working methods, but represented the archetypes of artistic methods used in art. The sport-related acts were mainly chosen from physical activities with which I had previous experience. I tried various ways to define the appropriate set of acts that would build a bridge between art and sport, and which I would be able to perform. Despite my preparatory consideration about the correct set of actions, the final set of tasks presenting the field between art and sport were chosen by testing possible actions. Some of the actions became possible by coincidence or sheer luck. For example, I recorded many of the videos on the premises of a local dance theater. The dance company shares the space with some circus artists. This coincidence made it possible to add some circus acts to the videos.

While selecting the tasks to perform, I did not try to build a full continuum from art to sport and vice versa: my attempt was more to record some acts that clearly belong to the historical traditions of art or sport, and to then complete the set of acts with actions more ambivalent in their relationship to these traditions. The idea behind the set of ambivalent acts was to provide the potential for different interpretations, and to encourage a reconsideration of these acts in relation to art and sport. Together, the detached and the rooted practices were intended to stimulate connotations within the framework of similarities and differences between art and sport practices.

While the art-actions were performed and recorded on the premises of the dance theater, the sport acts were mostly performed in authentic settings; organizing a mountain biking or track running performance in a studio space would have been impossible. Unlike the more realistic sport acts, which stayed more on the documentary level, the acts presenting "pure art" turned out to be just representations of making art, because none of them really presented my methods for making art,

but generic ideas about artistic work.[171]

Catching the active participant's point of view formed the first problem in constructing the work. How would it be possible to use a camera that has a fixed viewpoint to capture a much more multi-faceted personal perception? In practice, the solution used is obviously a compromise. After considering the problem, and conducting many preliminary tests on possible set ups, I decided to use a stationary camera to record the acts from a detached observer's point of view, and a head-mounted action camera to record the action from the active participant's point of view. The stationary camera, and its distance from the action, emphasized the remoteness of the observer's perspective; a real observer would be more emphatic in the situation, and continuously follow the act with movements of her gaze. The remoteness of the observer's view creates a juxtaposition with the participant's restless point of view.

The initial result of recording each task from both viewpoints was two videos, each somewhat resembling the same action. Later in the production, the raw videos were edited into two video clips presenting the same action from two perspectives. In order to maintain the illusion of a single act seen from two points of view, two sessions were needed, so that neither of the cameras nor the staged setting would be visible in the final video. The final videos needed to be compiled from short clips, and the abundant video material and selective editing from various recording sessions made it possible to obtain the result I expected. Some of the actions were brief, and that made it possible to use just a few video clips that covered most of the time, but other acts lasted a longer time, in a few cases hours, and then the material had to be edited radically in order to show the whole act in a reasonable amount of time.

Committing the chosen acts in a staged setting transformed them into representations of the real acts. However, this was needed, because the pursuit of similar, consistent perspectives throughout the series of videos was needed to bring their contents to the same level – as comparable activities, regardless of their original status as art or sport.

171 The unwillingness to include a video about my own artistic practice in the series was an important reason for making *Reality* as the second work in the exhibition: the work exposes the set up used in *Art – Play – Sport* and shows my actual artistic practice without the illusion utilized in *Art – Play – Sport*..





## The Videos

The final work consisted of fourteen videos, four of them representing art practices, four modern sport, and the last six videos something in between. All the acts required physical exertion, some intense action, some to a lesser extent. Some of the videos show a serious attitude towards the task; it is something that needs to be completed properly, something that needs an all-out effort. Some tasks are more playful; the action is something I am trying out and I am not certain about the outcome. If the videos are put on an axis between art and sport, according to my experience the array is as follows:

**Art:**
**Skull – Black Square – Perfect Circle – Step Piece – Igloo – Rhoenrad – Slackline – Juggler – Unicycle – Mountain Biking – Archery – Basketball – Stationary Trainer – Cooper Test**
**:Sport**

The art videos present or mimic classical approaches to the modern conception of art. Art is something special, made by people with special skills through a certain system. The result of the artistic work can be an object or, in the late modern understanding of art, a documentation of an action. However, the result belongs to a special category of art that is separated from everyday life. Usually the artistic process is hidden, only the result is public. Again, the four videos presenting sport activities focus on the main ingredients of modern sport: extreme physical effort, measuring, counting, and competing. Analogously to the results of artistic actions, the traditional sporting activities form a domain separated from mundane activities. The recorded sport activities fulfill Guttmann's characteristics for modern sport[172], whereas moving towards art their importance declines and other aspects come forward.

The middle acts suggest more sport than art, because of their physical nature. However, I believe that they take a clear step from the ideals of modern sport towards art. These actions are not confined to rational rules, in a manner similar to modern sport. The equipment used in a creative manner provides a starting point for the creativity to play – like an artist's medium provides a framework to work within. The measuring or counting (quantification) is not important within these actions. They can be physically demanding or even competitive, but neither is essential when engaging them. The aspect that connects the middle section videos is the playful attitude. You play with your equipment and environment in order to find new angles on the practice. There are certain conventions, but they do not regulate the search for new solutions. In art, similar testing of the limits of creativity and medium is a normal working method. Trying something new, leaving one's comfort zone, can help in opening dead ends in artistic work. Related creativity also exists in sport, usually outside organized competitive events, but its potential is more limited. For example, various fashions are generated in recreational running, in

172 Secularism, equality of opportunity to compete and in the conditions of competition, specialization of roles, rationalization, bureaucratic organization, quantification, and the quest for records.

order to bring variation and new kinds of experiences to the practice, but they do not affect the competitive variation of running. I have not found any references about competitive track runners participating in ultra-marathons, or advocating the new experiences to be found in barefoot running. The creativity that explores alternatives in sport is found in hobbyist sport, not competitive practice. In a way analogous to sport, the traditional mediums of art are less open to play. Naturally, one can play with classical drawing materials and technique, but not until the emergence of contemporary art routines in the 1960s was it customary to see a fully random action as art. The (physical) practices in the middle section of my videos reveal one possible connection between art and sport in their contemporary forms. If there exist more connections between art and sport, this is the area to look for it.

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### *Skull*

I had never before used drawing as the medium for my artistic work. For me, drawing has been a tool for taking notes and planning the artworks. However, I wanted to involve one of the most traditional practices of art into my work. In the video, I attempt to draw a human skull with a pencil for one hour.

### *Black Square*

The video reflects the objectives of the modernist movement; the action that produces the artwork is an integral part of the work. My task was to color one square meter of paper black for the duration of one hour, and to get the paper as black as possible. The task focuses only on volume and endurance. When quality is not imperative, working with both hands is an option.

### *Perfect Circle*

The objective during this act was to draw an exact circle in 60 minutes. The task of drawing a perfect circle combines striving for a pure form with skill and eye-hand coordination.

### *Step Piece – a remake*

This video is a remake of Vito Acconci's Step Piece from 1974. In his work, Acconci stepped up and down on an 18 inch high stool every morning as many times as he could for a three-month period. In addition, he meticulously recorded the daily results and the progress he made.

### *Igloo*

I tried to build an igloo, attempting to maintain the shape as a perfect hemisphere. The encounter of building theory and practice did not result in perfection. The capricious behavior of snow stretched the building process over three days, and forced a compromise in the shape of the igloo.

### *Rhoenrad*

Rhoenrad gymnastics is a special activity situated between a sport and a variety show. In Germany, the country of Rhoenrad's origin, it is clearly a sport, but in my native Finland it is better known from the circus. After a day's training, I was able to perform some basic moves.

### *Slackline*

Slacklining is almost pure play, but extended exercise becomes tough, and advanced tricks require fine-tuned motor coordination and courage. For me, balancing on the line is enough.

### *Juggler*

An embarrassing performance of my elementary juggling skills.

### *Unicycle*

A video about learning the fundamentals of a skill. A normal person should be able to learn to ride a unicycle quite easily. Achieving a basic skill level should take a few hours, or a couple of days at the most. I had no previous experience and received no guidance.

### *Mountain Biking*

Watching some sport events is simply ridiculous and absurd. Following a cross country mountain biking race is mainly waiting in the woods for the riders to pass that point. The experience is over in just a few seconds, while the rider's experience is totally different, as a lengthy and intensive movement through the environment.

### *Archery*

Archery is a sport, and it is an ancient skill. Only the result counts in competitive archery, but advanced shooting is also extremely elegant. When one starts archery, one has to learn a completely new set of movements as well as learn to control those movements very carefully.

### *Basketball*

Basketball is one of the most popular games in the world, and was the first sport I engaged in seriously. My active career lasted five years during my teens. After that, I have played only occasionally.

### *Stationary Trainer*

A stationary trainer is an alternative for an exercise-bike or a spinning bike. While using the stationary trainer the rider needs, in addition to simply pedaling, to balance the bike. On a stationary trainer, the balance is extremely delicate, and pedaling the bicycle is hard because there is no possibility to coast; one has to keep the wheels rotating all the time. Also, the absence of the cooling airflow makes the exercise heavier than a regular bicycle ride.

### *Cooper Test*

The objective of a Cooper test is to run flat out for 12 minutes. The level of physical fitness is measured by the distance traveled.

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## *In the Exhibition*

In the exhibition, the videos were presented as a two channel video installation, where the spectator's and the maker's viewpoints were projected in adjacent rooms. Although it was possible to see both projections simultaneously, more careful inspection required moving between the projections.

The projections were realized as rear-projections, fitted in free-standing frames on the gallery floor. This arrangement enables a closer inspection of the videos, and thus a more intensive experience than the normal movie theater-like situation, where the video is projected onto the wall. In my work, this is a benefit, especially considering the videos made from maker's point of view, where this arrangement places the perceiver closer to the original participant's point of view.

The conventions of exhibiting video-based art works are often unsatisfactory. Usually, the perceiver has no chance to influence the work, for instance to restart it, or even has information about the duration of the video. Also, there is usually no information about whether the work requires watching it from beginning to end, or if watching just a random part will be enough to achieve the desired effect. I wanted to avoid these issues, and therefore designed a user interface that enabled the perceiver to play the video clips as she wants. The active use of the interface was not obligatory in order to see the videos. If there was no activity on the interface, the videos were played in a random order.



The user interface in *Art – Play – Sport* consisted of imitations of classical sports pictograms[173] mounted on plywood squares, and a desk were the pictograms were placed. Each pictogram was equipped with hidden RFID-tags (radio-frequency identification -tags). Each tag triggered a corresponding pair of videos when it was moved to the play area marked on the desk. Below the painted play area was a hidden reading device that communicated with a computer to play the videos. In addition to the practical matters of designing the interface, I wanted to incorporate the perceiver's physical experience as a part of the art experience. Physical interaction adds an extra sensory layer to the visual experience. Selecting the videos by pressing buttons would probably have been the more obvious option, but by using a special interface I could hide the technique, as well as the similarities with the remote control of a regular television set.

# Other Works

In addition to *Art – Play – Sport,* two other works were presented at the exhibition. Their importance was lesser than the principal work, but they acted as commentaries on *Art – Play – Sport* and expanded the questions presented by it towards the reality of the artistic work, and the conventions of exhibiting the results of artistic work in a gallery. The intention of the two minor works was to detach the contents of the exhibition from a pure art-sport relationship, and draw attention to the real activities of art-making and the habits relating to art exhibitions.

173 My pictograms were modeled after the iconic pictograms used in the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, designed by Otl Aicher.

## *Reality*

This work follows the preparation of this very exhibition, in a 20-minute period of a real-life situation. Following in the fashion of *Art – Play – Sport* and yet deviating from it, I recorded my work from two angles, now simultaneously. The uncut material was used to make a split-screen video that loops continuously. The videos in *Art – Play – Sport* hide the real situation by carefully editing the material from various video clips, thus creating an illusion of two individual viewpoints. In this work, the reality of an artist's everyday work, visible in the entirety of its tediousness, engages in a dialog with the edited acts. The work exposes a limited part of my life in Big Brother –style, and the result is similarly interesting. Working in a messy bedroom, multitasking various projects on the computer, making coffee; it is just a normal day at the office with an action camera attached to my forehead. As well as being a documentary about the project as a whole, Reality is an essential part of the exhibition. It stays in the background, but at the same time connects the exhibition, normally seen as a part of the artworld, to the everyday world. Soon after the opening of

the exhibition, Mikko Oranen wrote in Skenet-magazine that "The artist's work by the computer is quite uninteresting to follow".[174] Creating an engaging experience was not the objective of this work – an occasional piece of everyday life is seldom interesting, but nevertheless it is the unglamorous work that takes place behind every artwork.

### *Visitor*

The second complementary work deals with the conventions of watching art. It presents an imaginary visit to a gallery. Two small screens show a visitor having a tour of a fairly similar exhibition. The first video follows the tour from the point of view of security cameras, and the other video presents the same tour from the visitor's point of view. In principle, the exhibition is similar to mine, but it is more anonymous, a draft of the final exhibition. The work brings the perceiver's experience of the exhibition to the fore, and simultaneously draws a parallel between the staged acts in *Art –Play – Sport* and the visitor's experience, as well as the artist's work lying behind all the presentations in the exhibition.

174 Oranen 2010.

## Some Halfway Conclusions

In the end, this art project dealt more with clarifying the findings in chapter two than looking for new features in the relationship between art and sport. In addition to probing the possibilities of a field between art and sport, the key elements of the project were to explore the differences between a practice and its results, as well as the development which took place between the traditional conceptions of art and sport and their contemporary forms. Even today, both art and sport are most often seen through their traditional conceptions, while the new forms stemming from or breaking from the tradition are passed over. Even if the new ways to approach art – and sport – creativity in obtaining physical experiences – are seen as developing from the tradition, the factors that make them novel are not carefully perceived; instead, the factors that tie the practices to the tradition are emphasized. Between the new approaches to art and sport it should be possible to find practices where the only difference is in the framework to which they belong or are interpreted through.

Again, the exhibition taught me something about combining artistic work with academic research. My understanding about the interplay between art and academic research, art and sport practice, and academic research and sport practice, already began to develop during my first art project, and the second project brought further illumination to the subject. This time, the central problem in combining art and traditional academic research was the reality that they operated at different paces. Artistic work (for a specific exhibition) initiates some time before the exhibition, and the fundamental thoughts behind the work connect quite permanently to the research problems active at the same moment. When the result of the artistic work is exhibited – usually months and sometime years later – the actual research problems have already moved forward, and the results of the artistic work, a collection or an exhibition, do not have a connection to the current questions in the research. Avoiding this problem seems quite impossible, because of the slow process of planning and executing the artworks. This means that art as a part of research is always a bit unsatisfactory, a bit late. Although the art project can be successful as art, especially for the audience, its relevance as a part of the research is somewhere else than in the finished artworks. The process of dealing with the joint problems in two different working methods can be fruitful, even though the benefits only become visible later, when both processes are treated simultaneously – while concluding the research.

Although the exhibition did not perfectly communicate all the thoughts behind it to the perceiver, it does not nullify its meaning to my work as a whole. When the academic research and artistic work are out of phase, it does harm presenting the artistic work in an exhibition, but it will not neutralize the significance of the artistic processes for the research. The processes initiated in the artistic work affect the research during the whole of its duration. The artistic work shifts the orientation of the research, produces material for the more academic part of the research, and raises questions to consider during the later stages of the research and artistic projects.

# 5 • Participating and Perceiving







It has been quite natural to treat art and sport as domains that are observed from the outside. Established scientific practice has emphasized an objective view, and the academic study of art and sport have also employed the same position – both artist and athletes have been objects of study, not the active producers of knowledge concerning them. The outside perspective allows one to treat the object of study as an objective and generalized entity. Even if the observer has himself been an insider in the domain, the subject has traditionally been treated from a distance. The spectators view concentrates – lopsidedly – mostly on the end result of the practice, an artwork or a performance, a sport competition or a recording, and that end result is used for the assessment of the practice as a whole, which naturally produces a partial understanding of it.

Later, in spite of the general tendency to emphasize the outsider's point of view, approaches were developed to deal with various practices from the participant's point of view, but they still form a clear minority. Even today, art and sport are, in most cases, seen through the perceiver's eyes – as the end products of a finished process. This concentration on the outsider's perspective and the end results usually produces a clearly defined, even analytical conception of the practice. However, including the participant's point of view can complete this one-sided perception, by opening up the processes behind the finished work. Gaining knowledge about unique instances of long lasting and common processes gives a fuller, however still fragmentary image of the practice. When compared with the knowledge gained from the outsider's view, the participant's view emphasizes more subjective and detailed aspects than the outsider's more generalizing gaze.

# The Double Role of the Participant

The role and the experiences of the active participants in art and sport are similar in many of their aspects - but there are also significant differences. Both practices are partly hidden from the audience and partly public. In both art and sport, the private work is the preparation for the performance that forms the single criterion of one's success in their pursuits. In spite of the external assessment of success, the participants are mostly motivated by internal, personal reasons. In this respect, participants in both art and sport are driven by the quest for excellence, in a way analogous to how Richard Sennet describes the craftsman's quest for excellence in his book *The Craftsman*. According to Sennet, a craftsman's striving for excellence takes the form of an obsession with the quality of the results.[175] Both artist and athlete – if they have any ambition – try to do their best. Even though they never reach the top of their chosen practice, their attempts are focused on producing the best possible personal result.  However, part of the motivation in art and sport comes from external pressure, such as an upcoming exhibition or competition, but the need to exhibit or compete also comes from the individual artist or athlete herself.

Both artist and athlete have their routine, everyday activities that form the major part of the practice, and then the short-term festive public activities, the competitions and the exhibitions or performances. The balance between the significance of and the time and energy consumed during the different parts of the practices is not even; most of the time and effort are clearly spent on the non-public practice. The private part of the practices is often forgotten, emphasizing instead the advantage of the short appearance in a major competition or an exhibition.

The routine, everyday activities are usually private in nature, practiced alone or with the closest partners - a coach, teammates, a studio assistant, a model. These private parts of the practice form the crucially important foundation for the fleeting moments of public activities. During the everyday practices, the athlete builds up the condition for the competitions (competing season), and the artist prepares the artworks for a public presentation. In addition to the basic artistic work, or an athlete's training, they both negotiate their financing and future schedules, and generally organize the foundations for their public appearances. For both artist and athlete, the key experience during their private work is uncertainty. One cannot know for sure if the actions made for the public appearance were the right ones. The artist has to balance between the history of her previous work and changes she is going to execute in the new body of work. Sometimes the situation is easier, especially if one is continuing in line with previous works, but at other times the artist feels the need for change, and the uncertainty can be nearly unbearable. There can be trusted people whose opinion may help with the difficult choices, but their opinions can be balanced in one direction or other because of personal or financial reasons: a friend may avoid criticism because she wants to support the uncertain artist, or a gallery owner may want the artist to follow the previous line of work because she knows customers are willing to buy works with a similar appearance. An athlete usually has at least one close person to share her uncertainty with – her coach. The nature of an athletic performance is also more standardized than an artistic one, which makes choosing the appropriate actions somewhat easier. The athlete and her coach share an objective, so the coach can make long-range plans for the athlete. However, it is the athlete who finally has to execute the workouts and feel her condition when the competition arrives. Today, there are several ways to measure, to quantify, an athlete's performance prior to a competition, but no test will tell the final truth. On the starting line, the athlete striving for best results feels the similar uncertainty as the artist feels before an exhibition opens or performance commences.[176]

For both the athlete and the artist, their public appearances create the foundation for their status and ranking within their fields. One can be the fastest runner during the training season, but if she does not manage to show the same performance in the competitions, her significance as an athlete as well as her ranking will be low. Similarly, an artist can make great works of art, but if they are never exhibited, her artistic weight is low. However, an artist's situation is slightly more forgiving in one sense - artistic significance can be defined posthumously.

# Conducting Research from the Author's Point of View

Various participatory methods have been developed in order to produce knowledge for research purposes from a group of people who have first-hand experience about a subject. The participatory working method is one element in a larger group of methods comprising action research. Some approaches, especially in the social sciences, follow previously developed methods, while others employ a more generally conceived participatory approach. Regardless of the exact method used, the presence of a few core elements is recommended: "Action research is grounded in lived experience, developed in partnership, addresses significant problems, works with (rather than simply studies) people, develops new ways of seeing/interpreting the world (i.e. theory), and leaves infrastructure in its wake." [177]

175 Sennett 2008, 243.

176 For instance: Koivula, Hassmén and Fallby 2002. Hamidi and Besharat 2010.

177 Bradbury  and Reason 2003, 156.

The original settings of action research emphasize problem-oriented work and practical results, but the more generally understood participatory view simply highlights the convergence of science and practice instead of listing the elements required. The key element is the orientation to inquiry, a research style. The methodology used should be adapted to the unique settings of the research.[178] Outside the social sciences, the idea of the participatory method is often adapted even more. However, active and practical participation has been seen as a method that provides the possibility to produce knowledge that cannot be obtained through the detached observation of others.

In the areas touched in my research, participatory methods have been employed to obtain an understanding of both the artist's and athlete's experiences. The usual approaches have been to study one's own practice, and to engage in a practice where the other members of a group are in the main role. In art, artistic research already possesses a potent tradition of participatory research. Artistic research can take various forms, with a different approach to the participatory element: one common approach is to study one's own practice[179], while a more uncommon method is to use one's own artistic work for gathering information from the audience.[180]

In addition to the field of artistic research, participatory methods have also found their way into the field of art history. In her recent doctoral dissertation, Katve-Kaisa Kontturi closely followed the artistic processes of the artists taking part in her research, and even produced an exhibition at a local art gallery together with the participating artists.[181]

The participatory approach also has a tradition in the context of sport and other physical activities: for example John Hockey and Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson have studied athletes, and especially distance runner's experiences, basing their research on their own running practices in the context of sociology.[182] Similarly, Timo Klemola and Tapio Koski have used their own experiences as a material for philosophical studies about the nature of sport experiences in several sports and physical traditions, ranging from yoga and karate to climbing and distance running.[183] Rebecca Solnit's multiperspective study of the meanings of walking combines historical and personal viewpoints on various practices within walking.[184] Ian Borden used his lifelong experience in skateboarding to produce a study about the spatial experience of architecture and urban planning from a novel perspective.[185] Richard Shusterman's research in somaesthetics takes a new initiative in aesthetics by using personal experiences to study the meanings of bodily experience. His approach combines traditional academic research with practical workshops, in order to widen the understanding of physical experience.[186]

These examples show how customary the participatory and subjective approaches are in various academic fields today. They promote the potential of personal experiences in order to achieve profound and often novel knowledge in academic disciplines ranging from sociology and urban studies to philosophy and aesthetics: the participatory approach can reveal new sides of cultural practices that are thought to be extensively studied.

My view is that a researcher's own participation in an activity impart a first-hand experience that helps him to understand other practitioner's experiences, even though they are not the same. Participation also gives insight about the conventions of the practice. These conventions are not always explained anywhere, and one can discover them only through one's own activity. Being active does not mean only doing the exercises or private practices, but also taking part in the social side of the practice - doing organized runs and having exhibitions in my case. A further approach I have used to understand the practices of art and sport has been obtaining other participants' descriptions - written or otherwise recorded - about their experiences. Today the possibilities of employing the latter method are wider than ever; all new social medias help to share one's experiences with other practitioners, and many athletes and artists are willing to do so.

The method used in this research is not a full-blown and structured participatory method, where the participants are co-researchers and have a certain degree of control over the research, as described in Jay Bergold's and Stefan Thomas' article, but more of a free-form participatory attitude towards the subjects of the research.[187] The initial guideline in my approach has been adapted from the ideas about the participatory philosophy of sport that have been pursued by Timo Klemola and Tapio Koski in Tampere University in Finland.[188] Their idea has been that one cannot analyze or explain the meaning of a sport, or the experience of a sport, without practicing it itself. Klemola's and Koski's approach has been phenomenologically inclined, and so emphasized the unity of bodily and mental experience. Their first studies were concerned with Asian body cultures - budo and yoga – with which both researchers had a long history in practice. However, they have also applied this method to modern sport; Koski to distance running and Klemola to various practices from rock climbing to Nordic walking. Even though Klemola and Koski have used their own experiences for their research, it has not been the only source of information. In his book *Juoksemisen filosofia* (The Philosophy of Running), in addition to his own first-hand experience Koski relies on several runners' records of their experiences from various written

178 Bergold and Thomas 2012.

179 For instance: Pitkänen-Walter 2006, Mäki 2005, Mäkelä 2003.

180 For instance: Pälviranta 2012.

181 Kontturi 2012. Kontturi 2010.

182 For instance: Hockey and Allen-Collinson 2006. Allen-Collinson and Hockey 2011. Hockey 2004.

183 Klemola 1994, 1998 A, 1998 B and 2003. Koski 2000 and 2005.

184 Solnit 2001.

185 Borden 2001.

186 Shusterman 2008.

187 Bergold and Thomas 2012, sections 3.4 and 4.1.

188 Klemola and Koski use the Finnish word *liikunta* instead of sport. *Liikunta* especially refers to voluntary physical exercise to improve health - it can be sport, but it is not necessarily so.

sources.[189]

While the participant's experience can be accessed through various approaches, for me the most important has been the researcher's own participation in the activity, which I have experimented with in both components of my research. I have connected my artistic activity to part of the research, as well as continuing the artistic work outside the context of research. Making art in the context of research was a conscious choice, because I wanted to explore the possibilities of artistic research. However, in my case the combination of academic research and artistic work changed the nature of the artistic work; it became somewhat subordinate to the research. The artistic work that was not part of the research had a very different degree of freedom, which was a useful observation. As a more private practice, I have continued my distance running exercises throughout the research and writing processes. Running practice that was not actually an official part of the research took on various roles during this time. Firstly, it has functioned as relaxation after days by the computer, in the normal role of exercise for fitness. Secondly, running has allowed me time for thought; while running I have been able to digest the various meanings of running and sport in contemporary culture that I have addressed theoretically during the workday. And, finally, my running habit has served the artistic projects concerning contemporary running culture, both as a source for artworks and as a method of artistic work.

189 Klemola 1994, 1998 A, 1998 B and 2003. Koski 2000 and 2005.

## Art

Artistic research forms the most customary tradition within the contemporary participatory research of art. There are various approaches to executing artistic research. Graeme Sullivan approaches it from *visual arts knowing,* which operates within the practical-theoretical creative practice in an artistic context, and where the artist self is the site of knowing. Visual arts knowing taking place in art practice is conceptualized and connected with the research through some overlapping angles: *thinking in a language* that is oriented towards the viewer, *thinking in a medium* oriented to the artwork, and *thinking in a context* oriented to the setting and situations. Sullivan's view is tolerant of the manner of conducting artistic research, as long as the artistic practice is in the focus.[190]

Teemu Mäki chooses to categorize the relationship between art and research in five groups. One extreme is to consider art itself as research. The artist searches for new possibilities in her artistic work – the work is research, no written account is needed. In the second category, artistic practice is connected to a written research. This is the established way of conducting artistic research. Art can also be subordinated to the research to such a point that the outcome is completely verbalized. This manner of pursuing research forms the third category. Mäki's fourth category, the research of art, is that conducted in art history, for instance. The last category is research for art where the research work forms a tool for making art. Current bio-art practices can employ this approach, when the results of scientific study are employed in artworks.[191]

190 Sullivan 2005, 128-130.

While Sullivan outlines the practice of artistic research solely from the artist's perspective, Mäki evaluates the power relations between art and traditional research. In spite of the difference in their approaches, both Sullivan and Mäki share the same preconception: artistic practice is capable of producing knowledge that cannot be reached in other ways. This view is shared by most people engaged in artistic research, despite other disagreements about the position of artistic research in academic institutions and outside them.

However, all variations of artistic research form a special case within the conventions of participatory research, as the researcher creates the subject of research through her own artistic practice. What makes artistic research different from, for example, the participatory research of sport and the autoethnographical approaches to various practices, is the specialty of the artistic work; even though two artists produce works that represent the same artistic genre, the background work and the artists' ideas about their practices can be worlds apart. In the academic tradition, researchers working within the same line of research usually share a substantial part of their presuppositions and methods, which is not necessarily the case in art.[192] Participatory research about other subjects can produce results that can be generalized, at least to some level, but artistic research has a more atomistic nature – it always reflects a single practice. However, as a genre artistic research can produce more universal information, and thus benefit academic research in a traditional way.[193]

191 Mäki 2012, 8.

The current interest in artistic research provides diverse examples of artistic processes and the insider's understanding about the artist's experience, which has not been possible to reach before. When artists are working as researchers, they often formulate their intentions, working processes, analyses of the finished work, and theories after their own work. Artistic research does not have to include this kind of self-analysis, but in most cases it does. For instance, Denise Ziegler's *Poeettisen piirteistä: kuvataiteilijan mimeettinen työskentelytapa* (Characteristics of the Poetic: The mimetic practice of visual artist)[194] deals with the artist's methods of constructing her works from the fragments of everyday life. While written research and practical work are closely intertwined in Ziegler's research, Harri Pälviranta divided his study *Toden tuntua galleriassa. Väkivaltaa käsittelevän dokumentaarisen valokuvataiteen merkityksellistäminen näyttelykontekstissa*

192 During the academic year 2010-2011 I attended Department of Art's weekly seminar about artistic research, where most discussions became tangled in the question of artistic work procedures – we couldn't agree about aspects of artistic research, because we did not agree about the qualities of artistic work.

193 Sullivan 2005, 102, 173-174.

194 Ziegler 2010.

(Experiencing Reality in an Art Exhibition. Encountering violence-related documentary photographic art in a gallery context) into artistic and academic parts. The connection between art and research arose from the use of artworks as the material for a questionnaire aimed at the exhibition visitors. The artworks form a part of the research: they are part of the publication as images, but only their effect on the exhibition visitors is present in the written part of the research.[195] Now, the first-hand experience of artistic processes is provided for the reader in a more reflected format than ever before. The academic context of artistic research makes the accounts of artistic work and it backgrounds more honest than previous artist's autobiographies or memoirs have been.

Apart from artistic research, other approaches to view artistic practice from the maker's perspective have emerged. For example, there have been experiments to adopt the artist's viewpoint in art history, traditionally specialized in looking at art and artists from the perceiver's point of view. Katve-Kaisa Kontturi followed artists in their work while conducting her research about artistic processes. Kontturi spent a considerable amount of time in artists' studios trying to understand the inarticulate dimension of an artist's work.[196] However, she found that simply following an artist was not really sufficient to the purpose, and calls her observations glimpses of art processes.[197] In addition to following artists' work and interviewing them, Kontturi curated an art exhibition *Siksakkia taiteesta teoriaan – ja takaisin* (Zigzagging from Art to Theory – and Back) where the artists participating her research, Susana Nevado, Helena Hietanen, Jaakko Niemelä and Marjukka Irni, exhibited the key works made during the research cooperation.[198]

195 Pälviranta 2012.

196 For instance: Kontturi 2012, 65-68.

197 Kontturi 2012, 26.

## *Sport*

While art and the theoretical research of art have developed their own customary and more experimental procedures for capturing the artist's perspective on the practice of art, a similar development has taken place in the academic research of sport. Unlike art, doing sport is not yet conceived of as research, so the participatory work is done within the framework of traditional research.

John Hockey and Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson have used the participatory and autoethnographical approach in their studies of the sociology of sport. Unlike Klemola and Koski, they have opened up the experience of running only through their own practice, employing their accumulated experiental knowledge together with fresh observations.[199] The usual method used by Hockey and Allen-Collinsonhas been to describe the running experience, the route, their physical feelings, and thoughts. Occasionally, the account has been accompanied with visual recording using photographs, thus expanding the potential of the participatory method through the use of visual

198 Kontturi 2010, 32.

199 Hockey 2004, sections 3.5, 7.1 and 7.2.





material. Naturally, as they are conducting research in the sociology of sport, Hockey's and Allen Collison's objectives have been different from Koski and Klemola, who as philosophers of sport have approached the general level of experiences instead of the particular. However, on the level of description the experiences seem very similar.

When opening up their experiences, Hockey's and Allen-Collison's style is plain and descriptive: for instance, in their article about a runner's everyday experience [200], most of the text describes their regular running route and events relating to certain landmarks along the way. The photographs en route help to contextualize their account. On another occasion, Hockey describes a short part of his running route, combining the physical experience, observations, and previous knowledge about the particular stretch in a seamless manner:

"At last on to the approaches to the park and the body begins to ease, the stride begins to lengthen, picking it up, picking it up, as the flow of movement begins to build on a nice flat piece of pavement, no flagstones, much smoother. But watching the small alley on the right out of which rabid motorists occasionally shoot. Hit the eroded approach path to the park, it's ok this weather, but in the very wet months it has a propensity to get slushy and is difficult footing, causing one to slide suddenly, much to the pained consternation of inner thigh adductors. So I normally avoid that area in the winter and take the road, unless wearing crosscountry studs."[201]

For an experienced runner, their observations do not offer much that is new, but strengthen accumulated personal experiential knowledge. Even though I run in Finland and Hockey and Allen-Collinson run in United Kingdom, I can share the impressions they have had running through local streets and parks. There are some differences between us; for example their history as competitive runners and having more running years behind them shows in their remarks about the possibilities of sport injuries, and the descriptions about detailed physical feelings as well as notes about places suitable for speed training, all features of running that are rather unfamiliar to me. However, I can easily relate their thoughts to my running experiences. For a non-runner, their accounts would give even more understanding about distance running and contemporary running culture.

The researcher's own bodily understanding is crucial for analyzing the athlete's reality. One does not have to be an elite athlete to understand a sport, understanding the basics and exercising regularly at least for some time is enough. One example of this approach is Michael Atkinson's study on parkour. Atkinson had a background in distance running, but no previous experience in parkour, when he came into contact with the local parkour practitioners and participated in their activities for several months. Atkinson's approach was to understand the social relationships of the *traceurs* (parkour practitioners), but he also obtained a

200 Hockey and Allen-Collinson 2006, 73-76.

201 Hockey 2004, section 5.4.

good perception of the bodily experience of doing parkour, which in turn formed the foundation of his understanding of the parkour culture as a whole.[202]

Ian Borden, in turn, uses his life-long experience in skateboarding to study the meaning of urban environment. His study combines an extensive historical account on the different practices within skateboarding to the main theme of skateboarders' vision and use of urban structures. The personal insight into skateboarding makes his research much more powerful than a study in which an outside researcher tries to find answers about street-style skateboarding and the practitioners' vision of the urban environment.[203]

An experimental method for analyzing bodily experiences is somaesthetics, developed mainly by Richard Shusterman. Unlike other analytic approaches to the experiential features in sport, somaesthetics promotes the further use of the acquired knowledge for improving one's quality of life. In addition to this beneficial approach, Shusterman's idea is radical in the academic context, as he reduces the importance of written research and emphasizes the significance of bodily practice, so that the active bodily practice is actually doing aesthetics. The deficiency in Shusterman's approach in the context of sport is his concentration on special physical practices like the Feldenkrais Method or the Alexander Technique, which provide a good starting point in the search for heightened somatic sensitivity, but where the experiences are difficult to compare with sport experiences. However, the concentration on rather particular physical practices in the original application of practical somaesthetics does not exclude the possibility of applying somaesthetic methods towards the understanding of an athlete's experiences.[204]

Instead of special techniques for promoting higher bodily sensitivity, following the original approach of somaesthetics, my interest is instead directed to the more ordinary bodily experiences, in the manner Joseph Kupfer describes in his book *Experience as Art: Aesthetics in Everyday Life*. Kupfer writes mostly about sport as aesthetic experience, but brings the physical experience back to the everyday level by noticing that jumping over a puddle or slipping on your coat can remind an ordinary person of the bodily experience of excellence in sport, or provide a moment when one feels a master of the physical world.[205] Kupfer's examples provide a starting point for developing somaesthetic applications for every-man's recreational exercises, like jogging (distance running), bicycling, laid-back ball games (football, basketball, ice hockey), aerobics (or other similar exercises like zumba), or swimming.

While conducting research from the active participant's point of view, the transient experience of a maker/participant blends with a further personal understanding of the practice. Even in the case of an athlete, the first-person view is not only physical. The participant's experience combines previous knowledge with the current activity. This combined understanding can form a broad experience, in the sense of John Dewey's aesthetic experience, producing a view where the subjective and objective perspectives mix in a novel way.[206]

202 Atkinson 2009, 169.

203 Borden 2001.

204 Richard Shusterman, "Pragmatist Aesthetics and Somaesthetics" (seminar: Pragmatist Aesthetics and Richard Shusterman, University of Helsinki 29.2.2012) .

205 Kupfer 1983, 116-117. Also Anderson (2001, 145) deals with the transformative possibilities of sport and movement.





# The Protagonists

Artist's work has changed radically since the emergence of the modern system of art: art is much more than producing images and three dimensional objects for aesthetic pleasure. The variety of working methods and mediums in contemporary art makes it impossible to describe the average work and working conditions of today's artist. A visual artist can be a painter when her procedures resemble the painting practice of the nineteenth century, but a video artist or an environmental artist have totally different kinds of tools, working environments, and schedules. However, all artists share at least one condition; they have some relationship with the artworld, and thus follow, at least partly, the internal habits of the artworld concerning the methods of preparing their works and presenting them for the public. In spite of the differences in their core work, these artists work share the dual nature of artistic work; there is a private part of the work where one prepares the works of art, and there is a public part where the work is brought to the public and is then open to the criticism.

Despite the recent changes in the artistic paradigm, the private and the public practices are usually very different kinds of activities. The private practice ranges from the conceptual organization of the artistic work to the practical and sometimes very technical execution of the artworks, or preparation for events. In a public exhibition or performance, the final results of the private practice are presented as a coherent and logical whole. The work in the background, including all of its uncertainties, the search for solutions, and the probing of possibilities is usually left from view.

The bodily experience of an artist naturally stands apart from that of the athlete's, but the inherent problems involved are quite similar. Artistic work is not so exclusively physical as sport, although physical activities are often part of making works of art. In traditional fine art, creating the artwork was a physical action. Even in contemporary art, where the medium of artistic work does not require physical contact with the (raw) materials, executing a work of art requires physical activity in the real world. At a minimum, this might be writing code on the computer, but often some aspect of performativity is present in the work.

The athlete's role is quite similar to that of an artist, but there are also significant differences. Where the artist is usually the only person in charge of the

206 Dewey 2005 (1934), 42-43 .

practice, most competitive athletes have a close relationship with their coach. Or, at least the coach is a person to whom the athlete is responsible for her voluntary engagement in training and competing.[207] The athlete is more closely dependent on supporting personnel and organizations than is the artist. In addition to the close relationship with the coach, there is a certain difference in being a member of a sports club or team from being a member of an artist's association or a group that joins forces for an artistic activity. An artist's association is a background professional organization, and an artists' group a joint operation, but when an athlete takes part in a competition, she is representing the club or team, if not her country. A recreational athlete is usually more like an artist in her dependence on others. There is no one to tell what today's training program contains, and no requirement to join a club.

If the athlete competes at the top level, her performance is measured by various quantitative methods and the results are used to optimize her training. The methods of measurement range from monitoring the heart rate to full fitness testing on the treadmill, and video assisted optimizing of the tiniest parts of the biomechanical performance. Testing is used as a foundation for adjusting the training – often the athlete's opinion about the methods used is not asked, because the method is based on scientific knowledge about sport performance. The best possible achievement in a certain event is the goal, not the athlete's best.[208]

An athlete performs similar activities in exercises to those that she presents in public competitions, i.e. running is trained predominantly by running. In addition, there are other kinds of exercises like running at a different pace or in a different style than those used in competitions, and complementary training like stretching and workouts in a gym. However, these exercises correspond much more with the public event than the background activity in an artist's work. A footballer plays football both in exercises and games, and a javelin thrower throws the javelin in both occasions, even though in the exercises the emphasis is in finding the right movements and developing the basic physical abilities needed, and in the competition to give a full-out effort: the public practice concentrates in giving a maximum performance in a specialized event. If the exercise program is successful, the performance in competition looks natural and often almost effortless. The pain and strain of the daily exercises are not visible.

The practice of a contemporary recreational athlete differs from that of a professional athlete. The recreational runner adjusts her exercises according to her own goals and sensations; she follows timetables and programs decided by herself. The basic structure of training for a competitive runner can be found in various guidebooks, but in the case of a recreational runner the reality of a practice is more difficult to reach. However, some runners have written about their practice, and these accounts shed some light on the signification of running today.[209] The contents of a practice varies greatly according to personal preferences: running can be an internal part of a lifestyle, and form a regular part of one's daily tasks. There can be a work-like ethos in the exercises, and one can even view running as a philosophical enterprise. Despite these differences in the foundational aspects of individual running practices, there are connecting features in most of the running practices I have encountered. The emphasis on new experiences forms the most common link between the various recreational approaches to distance running. Testing one's limits is another one; instead of competing against other athletes, today's recreational runner struggles against her own abilities. There is a significant difference between the achievement that defined modern sport, and struggling against oneself in contemporary recreational sport. When an athlete engaged in modern sport notices that the peak of her results is behind her, she usually terminates her career, but a contemporary athlete goes on: declining results do not nullify testing one's limits and the search for experiences.[210]

207 Bale 2004, 78, 80. Burke 2001, 232-233.

208 Bale 2004, 87, 92-95.

209 For instance, Koski 2005, Murakami 2008, Roos 1995.

210 Tainio 2012 a. Abbas 2004, 169-170.





# Artworld and Sportworld

No artist or athlete is totally independent in her practice. The active participants in both practices are part of greater networks that form the institutional systems of art and sport. The details of these institutional systems are different, but on a general level they are remarkably similar.

The institutional system of art incorporates more professionals than just the artists; all those who work with artworks and events, as well as those who have authority in the field of art through their opinions and expertise, are part of it. The professions of curators, critics, collectors, art historians, dealers, etc. emerged together with the system of art. In the late twentieth century, this complicated social system was defined as the artworld, which here signifies the practical activity of art-professionals.  A wider comprehension of the artworld also includes the supporting professionals and other helpers, like the technicians, manufacturers, and suppliers of art materials. Today, international art has grown into an industry that needs numerous professionals to realize ever more complicated and larger works. This wider social ecosystem varies greatly, depending on the internal practice of the individual art or even the artist, so it is more appropriate to refer to different separate artworlds instead of a single one. However, it is significant that the advent of an autonomous practice of art, i.e. the modern system of art, created a

support system that is substantially more wide-ranging than the artists' practices alone.[211]

The term "sportworld" has never come into such everyday usage as has the term artworld, but eventually the sport practice incorporated a networked structure similar to that of art. At the core of sport there are the athletes, and situated around them are the supporting personnel, coaches, agents, carers, massagers, physiotherapists, officials, etc. The group of associated authoritative professions, similar to curators and art critics, can be found in the sportworld too, even though it is not as large as in the artworld. This group consists of the members of the various local, national, and international sport committees, researchers in sport sciences, and writers in different fields of sport: historians, sociologists, ethics, etc. Sport journalists hold a weighty position in the field of sport. Nowadays there are even sport museums and halls of fame that formalize and solidify athletic achievements for future generations in several places around the world.[212]

211 Becker 2008 (1982), 13, 25.

212 Edgar 2013, p.38, 41. Polley 2010, 139-140.

## The Audience, the Spectator, the Perceiver

In addition to the participants and the background professionals, both art and sport practice are defined by their audiences. The audiences watch art and sport with competent eyes: a casual observer can find both art and sport interesting, even fascinating, but cannot easily find the aspects that make the work, competition, or game special and raise it above the average. It is a skill that requires dedication in order to learn to understand the finesses of art or sport. In sport, the spectators can be present explicitly, but often they are present as an implicit part in the apparently neutral studies of sport statistics and records, sport history, and the philosophical studies of sport. Artworks are generally observed as well as studied from the spectator's point of view. The academic disciplines of art history and aesthetics tend to look only at the object and its reception, and leave the artist's point of view unnoticed. Only sometimes is the artist's intention, or the circumstances of production, taken into consideration in addition to the reception of the work. A researcher represents the audience for art – in her position relative to the artwork and usually in her social position as well. Her knowledge about art might be greater than that of the average visitor in the exhibition, but her attitude towards art is probably similar. The rare exceptions to this general perspective can be found in artists' autobiographies, and some recent artistic research.

The changes in contemporary practices have lowered the divide between the audience and the active participants in both art and sport. In art, this development has taken place through community art practices, where the artist works more like a conductor with the non-professionals, often the audience, and creates the work in co-operation with them. This kind of work often takes the form of an intervention, and regularly deals with minorities or groups of people with a common problem, but can have a more traditional approach towards creating an artwork too. Community art practice emphasizes the work of art as an event instead of as a solid piece of work. However, the practice also produces more permanent works, as traditional works or as documentation of the passing event. In spite of the co-operative working model in community art, the artist is in many cases distinguished as the originator-creator of the work. This latter kind of activity is exemplified by Miwon Kwon through *Full Circle,* a project by Suzanne Lacy. The artist organized groups of female volunteers to decide the contents of the artwork, e.g. one hundred boulders placed on the streets of Chicago that would commemorate historically significant local women. The co-operation with the groups of women was limited to the selection of the women that would be honored, while Lacy was in charge of the rest of the project.[213]

In addition to community art practice, which emerged from the fine arts in the traditional sense, the border between maker and perceiver is challenged by the new forms of decorating and marking urban space, for instance in various genres of street art. For instance, from the traditional spray-painted graffiti (which is not seen as art) has been developed into various methods of marking urban space; on the craft-oriented end there is knitted graffiti, which is the practice of making knitted decorations into urban details, and on the artsy end there is light graffiti, where the walls are temporarily marked with projected images. Both practices are more tolerated than traditional graffiti, and they can be either legal projects or unauthorized interventions, made by professional artists or untrained activists.[214]

In sport, the lowering of the boundary between the participants and the audience has emerged through the rise of adventure sports. In various new sports, like snowboarding, skateboarding, and ultra-marathons, the spectators are often practicing the sport themselves, and the participants also behave like spectators while waiting for their turn, or after finishing their competition. What is common between these sports is their fairly short history as sports (snow- and skateboarding), or a new adaptation of a traditional competitive achievement sport (the ultra-marathons), where the modern competitive quest for winning and records is replaced by competing with oneself, together with other participants.

213 Kwon 2008, 118-120

214 For instance Pitsihilli (2009) by Kaija Papu (http://www.kaijapapu.com/pitsihilli.htm, accessed 3.1.2014) could be an intervention, but it is a commissioned project.

The achievement is no longer measured by success against the other participants, but against personal performance.

In addition to the physical sports, some novel conventions within sport fandom can mix the roles of the audience and the athlete. On sport games played with a computer or a game console, the player can control the characters in the game, and control the game itself, like a real life player. In addition to these computer games, the contemporary practice of playing fantasy leagues brings the sport fans closer to the players. In a fantasy league, the player creates a team from real-life players and competes against other imaginary teams in the league. Unlike fully commercial sport computer games, fantasy leagues are played between acquaintances as well as in commercially organized leagues.[215]

## *Watching sport*

Watching sport moves masses. A typical case is a major league football game, where there are tens of thousands people in the stadium, and multiple times more watching through their televisions around the world. All these people see the same game, and approximately from the same point of view. They see and react to the same events, and share their feelings with the other people in the audience. The quality of the feeling can vary if one of the teams is important to you, but still there are many others who share the feeling.[216] The situation is quite contrary to being an actual participant in a sport event. When one is a participant in a sport, one is in contact with only a small group of people, which can range from fifteen players in a local basketball game to thousands of runners participating in the same marathon. In the first case one has a contact with all the other participants, but in the second case only a fraction of them. However, the participant's point of view is always on the move, and all the participants have their own perspective. The events are shared, but always from different points of view.

Even though urban marathons do attract masses, contemporary distance running is not a popular audience sport in a similar way as it was during most of the twentieth century. Today's running culture emphasizes participation over watching. As more and more people have engaged in running, the wonder of distance running achievements has dissolved: while running a marathon in just over two hours is still an amazing accomplishment, it is possible for many to participate in the same marathon race as the elite runners, and to enjoy their own achievements instead of only watching the contest. In addition, among today's elite runners there are no such stars that could challenge the most famous teams in popular team sports and make themselves into household names.[217]

Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht explores the aesthetics of watching popular sports with enormous audiences. For him, the main reason for watching sport is aesthetic; in spite of other reasons, like working out aggression in an acceptable manner, promoting nationalism in a somewhat civilized way, taking care of one's health, or socializing with friends, the appeal of sports relies on the aesthetic experience of the process of the game or competition.[218]

Gumbrecht parallels watching sport to a theater performance. There is no predefined plot, but there is a framework that allows the dramatic events to take place. The dramatic quality naturally varies according to the particular event, and the environment present at the event. A 100-meter sprint has different dramatics from a marathon or a football game. Also, a particular 100-meter sprint differs in dramatics when it takes place on a local track or in a major competition, for instance as a part of the IAAF Diamond League. Unlike the conventional view, Gumbrecht sees that the athletes are not simply performing as themselves, but as archetypes similar to the medieval theater –"the incarnation of a certain physical and/or strategical function". According to Gumbrecht, the player playing forward during a football game is nothing but a forward, and the sprinter in 100 meter contest is nothing but a sprinter, even though they can be well known celebrities outside the competition.[219]

On the other hand, Wolfgang Welsch finds the personality of the athlete more important. In contemporary mega-sports, successful athletes become their own trademarks, which are always noticed and aesthetically meaningful.[220] Welsch's view is probably true when the athlete is a global superstar, while Gumbrecht's view applies to the rest. However, an athlete's personality and character are just a part of sports drama. More important is the passing drama that comes from the framework of the rules of the particular sport, combined with the abilities of the athletes and the local circumstances and sheer chance.

Paul Woodruff defines theater as art by which human beings make or find human action worth watching, in a measured time and place.[221] Woodruff also sees sport as a good example of contemporary theater. For him, theater can be seen in various everyday actions, among which sport forms one of the most interesting examples, as it both diverges notably from the traditional idea of theater and beats traditional "theatre as art" in terms of popularity. In sport, the theater emerges from the formal staging of actions that are presented in front of an audience. Like Gumbrecht, Woodruff does not trouble himself with the lack of a script, but focuses on the predefined frame of action that is known by the audience. This framework directs the action, which is limited to a previously defined time, measured by a clock or other means, for instance the length of the run, or the number of attempts or innings. The result of the arrangement for the contest can produce just a routine performance, or an exceptional event that cannot be repeated – in Finnish sport a particular event to remember is, for instance, Lasse Virén's victorious 10 000 meter run in the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, where he fell during the competition and still finished

215 Turtiainen 2012, 93-94.

216 Mumford 2012.

217 Hardman 2013. Berking and Neckel 1993, 68-69.

218 Gumbrecht 1999, p352.

219 Gumbrecht 1999, 353, 357.

220 Welsch 2005, 137.

221 Woodruff 2008, 18, 50.

first. Both types of events produced by a sport contest (or other kind of theater) generate a sense of belonging. A generic type of event produces a passing and not especially momentous sense, while an exceptional event can produce senses that move a nation.

Most authors who have dealt with sport from a spectator's point of view treat the stadium as a place where the everyday world is shut out. For Woodruff it is a sacred space, marked off from the real world by chalked lines.[222] Gumbrecht describes a stadium as a space "isolated from the space and time of the surrounding everyday world" which in between games forms an unused, isolated place within an urban environment.[223] Joseph Kupfer describes the changes in the notions of time and space with an apposite anecdote about professional baseball: "...before every ballgame the umpires shout "Play ball"..." Playing is the key, even in professional sport. Even if the players are paid enormous salaries, the sport is still play - a serious play, but not deadly serious, and being at play is being in a different world within our everyday world. Sport-play is played in the sanctuary of a sports field, and it is confined by its rules and traditions. Both the athletes and the audience share (should share) an understanding of the special rules taking place while *playing*.[224]

John Bale refers to stadiums as gardens, where nature is mastered in order to create a standardized space for sport. The space of sport has developed from natural space, from a field of grass to an increasingly technical and standardized space. At first the space was demarcated by chalk lines that limited the game to a certain area, and later the surface was made more even and the sport fields around the world were standardized in order to provide equal circumstances for contests. In many sports the natural surface, of grass or gravel, was replaced by man-made materials that allowed better results. Then, stadiums were built around the sports fields. Bleachers provided some shelter from the wind and later, during the last half of the twentieth century, the roofing of stadiums finally cut the natural element away from watching as well performing sports – at least in competitions. Some sports (for instance basketball) were practiced indoors from the beginning, but the development of sport arenas has confined originally outdoor sports like ice hockey and football to indoor spaces. Even smaller sports, like speed skating and rock climbing, are today practiced in man-made environments.[225]

Watching a sport contest is a seemingly theater-like experience, and a stadium is a special, sacred space; but what is experienced there? The contest and the action of the athletes are at the center of attention. Most of the time, the audience follows this action and participates in the event by cheering, usually chanting and making gestures, standing up, waving hands, and sometimes synchronized movements like waves. Throwing objects onto the field also takes place, which crosses the line that defines the sacred space.

Neither is the stadium quiet. There are the sounds made by the audience, the announcements, and the commercials. There can be music, and special sounds indicating a score has been made. In international events, the national anthems are played. If refreshments and snacks are sold at the event, it turns into a real multi-sensory experience. Even if one is not drinking or eating oneself, the smell is present all over the arena. In addition to the contest itself and spectators' participation, there are other visual diversions. The athletes are wearing clothing appropriate to the sport. Modern sport garments are specially designed to improve the athlete's performance, and in addition they are designed to fit current fashion trends and form a colorful addition to the visual joy of the sport. In many sports, the suits are tight fitting and reveal the athletes' trained bodies. In other sports, the clothing forms an armor that helps to cope with the physical contact in the game. This type of clothing transforms the athlete into a modern gladiator.
In competitions, the athletes wear the official suits of their club or team. These suits are often covered in the logos of the athlete's or team's sponsors, or when representing a nation they are marked with a flag or a crest. Both types of decoration change the atmosphere of the event – imagine if Formula One drivers had national emblems on their outfits instead of their numerous sponsor logos. Some sports have cheerleaders, who entertain the (male) audience during the breaks and who introduce an element external to sport to the event.

Not all sporting events are real spectacles. For example, Ossi Naukkarinen writes about the interiors of Finnish ice stadiums. The recently built arenas, owned by the wealthier teams, are equipped according to the international standard with soft chairs, nice restaurants, and VIP boxes, but the traditional ones have only very basic conveniences. The floors are made of concrete, the chairs are hard plastic or wood, and the atmosphere is rather chilly. The acoustics are harsh and echoing, and the rock music played during the breaks always sounds the same. In spite of the modest environment, the ice hockey games played in these halls can provide similar experiences for the spectators to the games played in the new arenas. Some part of the audience even values these modest ice stadiums over the new ones, because the atmosphere is more true to "real" ice hockey.[226]

Nick Hornby has a similar nostalgic tone when he writes about the rebuilding and refurbishment of English football stadiums in his autobiographical book *Fever Pitch*. He complains about the disappearance of the old, traditionally working class football culture, which was replaced by a safe and clean middle class (sports) entertainment. The renewal of English football, complains Hornby, has all the typical features of turning sport into an

222 Woodruff 2008, 111.

223 Gumbrecht 1999, 363. In fact, most stadiums are used for daily exercises in between the games. They just look empty for those who are not permitted to enter.

224 Kupfer 1983, 111, 113.

225 Bale 2004, 41-43.

226 Naukkarinen 2008, 199.

entertainment industry.[227]

Learning to watch a sport reveals various interesting details in the culture surrounding that particular sport, which are not clearly noticed when the practice is too familiar. Max Ryynänen started to follow NHL ice hockey with little previous knowledge, and decided to learn the subtleties of the sport. His aim was to concentrate on the philosophical and especially aesthetic aspects of the game. This analysis extends all the way from the general features of today's NHL ice hockey league and its characteristics to the small details of the game: the anatomy of great goals is examined as well as play-off beards. En route to deeper understanding, Ryynänen found connections between classical philosophers, for instance Kant, the community, and changes in professional ice hockey. His approach to the tough world of professional ice hockey is systematically positive. The game has its flaws, such as the enormous salaries paid to the players and the endemic violence, however Ryynänen does not straightforwardly criticize these faults but analyses them in a neutral tone. The violent acts that are a natural part of modern ice hockey can damage the sport as a whole, but Ryynänen can find somewhat positive aspects in hockey fights, such as making a good show for the audience, who expects to see them, and even admits that the fights have their own aesthetics too.[228]

The context of watching affects the spectator's experience. The experience in a live situation is dependent on the environment of the contest: the experience of watching is different in a modest sports field, watching a local contest, from following a spectacle of sport in the comforts of a modern stadium. Despite the differences, these experiences are related. Watching sport through media forms a different context, which has its own peculiarities. The traditional manner of following sport through radio and television broadcasts has expanded into other mediums, mainly through the internet accessed with various devices. While radio and television broadcasts fix the following of sport to certain events and times, the internet provides access to almost any event, and also provides the possibility to see earlier events at a later time or to return to historical contests over and over again. Radio broadcasts of sporting events are quite obsolete today. They seem to work only as a substitute for the "proper" means of following sporting events. The diversity of the possible channels for following sport outside the live game is wider than ever before. In addition, some of the new media channels make it possible to mix their feed with the live situation, creating a new dimension to watching sport in a stadium.

The TV-experience of sport departs from the live contest in various ways. Firstly, it is not always "live", but a recording, for instance a short clip in the sports news. Secondly, the point of view in television broadcast changes constantly, from a wide-angle view to close-ups that can concentrate on the center of events or the facial expressions of the athletes. The key moments can be shown from several angles and in slow motion, so no detail will escape the spectator. In addition to TV, many of these effects are available in a modern stadium equipped with giant video screens. Unlike the live situation, a TV-broadcast is an edited experience; the broadcasted contents are selected by the director, who ideally has an idea what aspects of the contest are important and how the tension (and the interest of the spectator) is built up.[229] The television broadcast produces meanings that are not exactly similar to the live experience. Moreover, the spectator is detached from the events in the stadium; no cheering or gestures made there affect the situation or atmosphere of the contest.[230]

Furthermore, the environment of watching televised sports affects the spectator's experience. It is utterly different to watch an important contest alone at home than in a crowded sports bar. The latter can be close to the live experience, but the event is still an edited one. Watching sport alone by TV draws closer to the experience of sports over the internet, but without the immediate two-way channel. Following sport over the internet is still an extension of the lonely television experience. There are not yet any established live sport feeds on the internet as of 2014, so most online sports are recordings of previous events, although the content is updated often and fresh material is available all the time. The possibility to access all kinds of sports all over the world produces a new kind of sport phenomenon. In his writings about NHL ice hockey, Ryynänen states that the possibility to access NHL games over the internet is a paradigmatic change that has turned North American ice hockey into a truly international game. Following American ice hockey, for instance in Europe, was possible before this, but now the games are online soon after they are finished, thus turning European ice hockey fans into potential NHL addicts. In addition to the novel international dimension, using YouTube and other sites to follow sport give the fans a chance to watch the events and their details over and over and in slow-motion. This produces more knowledgeable spectators, who can appreciate the sport more.[231]

The internet, and especially social media, is also used to comment on sporting events nearly in tandem with the action on field, and naturally for the post-match analysis. The variety of mediums used is abundant. Besides the more official websites that report the results and details of the contests, there are unofficial websites, discussion forums, and blogs that bring out diverse opinions about the same events. Many of these medias already allow commenting, and create open discussions about the sport, but the recently expanded use of various social media networks, such as Facebook and

227 Hornby 2000 (1992), 68. However, later in the book Hornby admits that the stadiums had to be renewed because of the safety issues uncovered after the Hillsborough accident in 1989.

228 Ryynänen 2006-2008.

229 An excellent artistic example of building up the experience is *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait*, a documentary film by Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno (France/Iceland 2006), where the cameras focuses only on the soccer superstar Zinedine Zidane, producing a novel view of a football match.

230 Gumbrecht 1999, 367-368. Kupfer 1983, 131.

231 Ryynänen 2006-2008, "Internet, Google and Computer Games," blog entry by Max Ryynänen, 6.11.2006.

Twitter, has added an extra dimension to following sport events. The opportunity to connect fans instantly from various locations creates new kinds of communities. The lonely sporting event in front of a television can turn into a heated discussion about the contest at hand.[232] New media also works as a connection between the (professional) athletes and their fans, through various social media networks. Today, the communication between enthusiasts on the internet can also take place at live contests; smartphones bring the internet to the bleachers and stadium backstage, which in turn can produce new types of problems. In fact, during the 2012 Olympic Games in London, the use of Facebook and the popular microblog Twitter was restricted for the athletes and volunteer Olympic Game workers because of the strict sponsorship rules of the Games. The members of audience also encountered some restrictions on their social media use.[233]

In addition to the newsfeeds, commentaries, and discussions on the internet, other new media applications add to the experiences of consuming sport. Sport computer and console games bring the "real" sport leagues and the "real" athletes to the fans' computers and television screens. These games replicate the real teams and series, and give the fans an opportunity to live the action through the athlete's experience. The authorization of the games by the official leagues (NHL, NBA, FIFA) ties the game players more closely to the sport. [234]

232 Turtiainen 2012, 77, 83.

233 Pfanner 2012. McClusky 2012. Morse 2012.

## *The Audiences of Art*

The practices connected to watching art developed simultaneously with the system of modern art. Unlike sport, which developed from a compound of high and low class physical practices, art practices expanded from the top of the social hierarchy downwards.[235] The advent of public art museums and galleries extended the audiences of art from the higher classes to the middle and, to some extent, the working classes. The difficulties and fears connected with the presence of the lower classes at art events were various. Shiner exemplifies this with the fictional wedding party from Emile Zola's novel L'assommoir (1877). The wedding party visits the Louvre and is baffled by the contrast between the finely dressed guards, the mirror finished parquet floors, and the low and obscene subjects of the artworks. Without even a basic knowledge about art and the practices of looking at art, the party is lost in front of the paintings.[236] Zola´s story is an extreme example, but the museum visitors were instructed in proper behavior by signs that told them not to sing, tell jokes, or play games in the museum galleries. The museum space was to be respected as a sanctuary of art.[237]

The sanctuary of art was quite different from the sports field, where shouting, cheering, and encouraging one's favorites was allowed, and even expected. After the basic behavior in the museum was learned, the tuition continued as guidance about the history, significance, and value of artworks and artists. Art critiques and histories emerged to meet demand. Previous texts about art, as well as artist's biographies, had been directed towards the artists and a small group of connoisseurs and collectors, but now their aim was to educate the new audiences of art.[238]

234 Turtiainen 2012, 94.

235 Shiner 2001, 95.

236 Shiner 2001, 213.

237 Shiner 2001, 135.





This role differentiation of art audiences continued to exist throughout the modern system of art. There were the experts – artists, collectors, art historians, and critics – who very much acted as the gatekeepers of art. Their opinion was significant when the quality of artworks was assessed. If the experts decided that some art was obsolete, it was difficult to create any further interest in it.[239] Especially during twentieth century modernism, the "right" art was difficult and continuously testing the limits of artistic expression. The expert's opinion was often contradictory to the public opinion about what constituted good and agreeable art, but this did not create a problem, because one important function of art was to be in opposition to society's general tendencies.[240]

For example, in Finland the series of Ars-exhibitions that took place first in the Ateneum Art Museum, and since 2001 in the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, have functioned as showcases for international contemporary art since the 1960s. For artists and other experts, they have been an opportunity to see new art and to be inspired by it. However, for the greater public the exhibitions have been a contradictory experience; the experts have been advertising the artworks in the exhibition as the best of contemporary art, but the public have experienced the works as puzzling and even forbidding. The first exhibitions in 1961 and 1969 brought a totally new view of art to a developing and reasonably isolated Finland, but as late as 1995 some artworks in Ars-exhibition caused wide public discussion. For instance, Ulf Rollof's *11 February 1994,* where a specially built machine made pine trees fall down and rise up again and again, as well as Henrik Plenge Jakobsen's *White Love,* where various bodily fluids and excretions were constantly mixed in blenders and other household appliances, provoked loud objections. The series of Ars-exhibitions exemplifies how in art the experts' vision of good and significant art contradicts with the public's quest for the original features of the fine arts: beauty and elevated experiences.[241]

Even today, the art experience is clearly less democratic for its audience than the sport experience. The opinions of the art experts often conflict with more commonly held views. Contemporary ideals and the system of art require this disagreement of tastes, even though it makes art look difficult and elitist. Unlike in art, in sport there is less need for experts to tell the audience what kind

238 Shiner 2001, 92.

239 Becker 2008 (1982), 138, 141, 153.

240 For instance in Adorno1997 (1970), 226.

241 Kastemaa 2009, 16, 38-39, 79.

of performance is good or excellent - the results in the contest will tell it to everyone. Even in the qualitative sports, where the judges evaluate the performance, the criteria for excellence are commonly known.

In spite of the tradition of expert knowledge in art, there are recent changes in art practices that have somewhat reduced the weight of expert opinion, and in addition undermined the traditional market possibilities for artworks. The most important change has been the advent of community art projects, where the artist works in co-operation with non-professionals and gives them some authority over the work. The expert artist's opinion and power in the communal work focuses on the idea and the practice, but not the results of the project. The end product, if there is any, can be contradictory to the policy of the organizing party. When thinking from a perceiver's point of view, it is significant how the participation changes the conception of the artwork. Being a co-creator probably makes the work more meaningful than being just one of the audience. This effect, however, varies according to the type of co-operation. If there is a possibility to really have an effect on the contents of the work, the effect is certainly stronger than in a case where the participants just follow the organizing artist's orders.[242]

Furthermore, lowering the borders between art and other practices has created independent areas of activity where the art expert's opinion about the "right" or "good" art does not have weight. Many of these forms of expressive practices have existed for a long time, but only became better known and even exhibited publicly in an art context quite recently. Examples of this kind of practice are outsider art, artistic practices outside the western tradition that have emerged from the fringes of the art world since the 1980s: the exhibition *Magiciens de la terre,* organized in Paris in 1989, brought artistic traditions from outside the western culture, from the margins, into common knowledge by presenting it together with contemporary western artists working in centers. A few years later, contemporary Finnish folk art, *ITE-taide*, became known through active presentation in books and exhibitions.[243]

Likewise, many visual practices that have developed in connection with urban (youth) cultures have recently been seen as crossing the borders of the artworld. The experts of the artworld are interested in these practices, but their opinion about the right and good does not have a great effect on the original practice. For instance, graffiti is created and valued according to the collective opinion of the graffiti painters and hip-hop oriented urban culture. The visual end product of graffiti does not cover every aspect of the practice. A graffiti is also valued according to the qualities of the location of the piece and the attention it receives.[244] Naturally, some of the makers working within practices outside the artworld are taken into the artworld, but that does not

242 Kwon 2004, 107, 116-117. Haapalainen 2006. 163-164.

243 Araeen 1989, 3-4. Buchloh 1989, 150-151. Granö, Honkanen, and Pirtola 2000. Exhibition *Omissa naailmoissa - Toinen taide* .In Kiasma, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki 14.5.-21.8.2005 .

244 Merrill 2014, 4.





affect the other practitioners. The most famous recent example of the transformation of a street artist is Banksy, whose street art pieces turned into museum art at a swift pace.[245] What is common to all these practices outside the artworld is the unstructured organization; the division between the makers and the audience is fluctuating – anyone from the current audience can become a maker.

Another phenomenon that has changed art's relation to its public is the recent tendency of turning art into a form of cultivated entertainment. This development has taken place in various occasions; for instance world class art museums like the Tate Modern or Guggenheim museums have been transformed into tourist attractions, "cultural supermarkets"[246] where the importance of the overall museum experience increases. In these "superstar museums"[247], the quality of the exhibits is not enough, and the visitors require a range of subsidiary facilities; at the minimum there has to be a museum store selling designer souvenirs and merchandise adapted to the current exhibitions, and cafés and restaurants that can also adapt their menus to the museum program, but these extra elements can be anything from the museum architecture (Tate Modern, The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Kiasma in Helsinki) to 3D cinemas that present movies related to art. The museum exhibits do not change, only a new layer is added to the museum visit: it is not only didactic anymore, but entertaining as well. The contents are wrapped in an entertaining package, where the visitor is not only a viewer, but has the possibility to participate in some activities. The majority of the visitors do not go to the museum only to learn about art, but because of the museum experience. A visit to a major museum is a wow-experience, because of the museum as a whole – not necessarily the art on display. [248]

The tendency to turn art exhibitions into a cultivated entertainment - edutainment - is visible in other occasions too. The art projects/programs that are organized in connection with other events often turn into entertainment. The dominant event can be a cultural one, for example the European Capital of Culture or World Design Capital, or something totally different, like the Olympic Games. Before and during the London 2012 Olympic Games various art events were organized under the label of Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival. Many of the events fall into the category of art as entertainment: for instance, topping up London's best known public statues with decorative headwear was purely and only entertaining, and exhibiting a collection of BMW cars decorated by leading international artists is half entertaining and half marketing of the

245 The website of Walker Art Gallery: "Banksy sculpture on display at the Walker Art Gallery," http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/walker/collections/room-guide/banksy-sculpture-liverpool.aspx, accessed 4.1.2014. Also Dickens 2008.

246 van Aalst and Boogaarts 2002, p.197.

247 Frey 1998.

248 van Aalst and Boogaarts 2002, p.197. Frey 1998, 118- 119. Kotler and Kotler 2000, 271, 272, 276, 284. Plaza 2000, 270, 272.

BMW brand.[249]

A further novel convention for connecting art, entertainment, and marketing is the practice of bringing high quality art into the commercial spaces. In Helsinki, the department store Stockmann, together with the furniture company Artek, organized an exhibition in Stockmann's exhibition hall (Argos-halli) showing an installation by internationally known artists Tommi Grönlund and Petteri Nisunen. The installation consisted of nearly 400 Alvar Aalto's Stool 60s and coincided with the stool's 80th anniversary.[250] The exhibition met evidently high artistic standards, but in my view the context of celebrating a design furniture's anniversary in a department store brings it into the framework of a marketing gimmick.

Turning art into entertainment has two different consequences, depending on the context: the first turns original art into entertainment by changing the context of the art's presentation, from the traditional museum setting to a cultural theme-park; and the second makes art less serious, less independent, by bringing it into a commercial context or by using art to elevate or accentuate some event or product. Neither of the consequences is purely negative, but their effect on art's status and position in culture must be noticed.

249 The website of British Fashion Council: "Hatwalk," http://www.britishfashioncouncil.com/news_detail.aspx?id=443, accessed 4.1.2014, ICA website: "Art Drive!," http://artdrive.ica.org.uk, accessed 4.1.2014.

250 The website of Artek, http://www.artek.fi/fi/news/pressreleases/279, accessed 27.3.2013.

Whatever the method used, bringing art closer to entertainment affects art's audiences. In the first cases presented, the original artworks in museums or in the context of a festival get a wider public access, which in turn has an opportunity to become more familiar with art. The part of the audience that has been interested in art before the museum was turned into a tourist attraction will probably continue their visits, because the art is still in the focus. The masses visiting the exhibition can be annoying, but not seriously so.

In the second case, when art is brought into a commercial context, the (supposedly) deeper meanings of art are more overridden by the commercial hype. In this case the new kind of art project can draw new audiences to art, but it is probably not so attractive to traditional art audiences, who might avoid these events not because of the quality of the art, but because of the openly commercial context, which is seen as in opposition to art's goals in the context of the modern system of art.[251]

Both the new practices of art, as well as the new ways of exhibiting art, have expanded the possible audiences of art. However, only the new practices have been embraced by the core audiences and authorities of art, while the new exhibition practices are valued differently depending on their relationship to commercial products and practices. The idea of independent art is still very strongly rooted in the art audience. The attitude within the sport world is quite the opposite; despite the occasional underrating of new sport practices, sport audiences have generally welcomed new ways of enjoying sport.

251 For instance: Jones 2012. Also Adorno 1997 (1970), 226.

My comprehension is that the key to the different attitudes between art and sport audiences is that following sport is generally understood as an act of consuming, while following art is not (even though it can be). The idea of consuming makes it possible to utilize sport in any possible way, while art cannot really be separated from experiencing the original work - for instance, viewing art through mass media is no substitute for experiencing the real thing. Art can be presented and introduced on television and the internet, but the experience is seldom the same as seeing the real works. There are exceptions: for instance, computer-based works that are always exhibited on monitors, and in some video art the size and quality of the image does not play an important role. However, these works are more willingly seen in a real "exhibition" situation, controlled at least to some degree by the artist.

Comparing the participant's and the audience's perspectives in art and sport reveals the double character of the experiences these practices can provide. The conventional observation of art and sport from the audience's point of view does not produce a comprehensive view of them. Including the participant's view in the inspection sheds additional light, especially on the everydayish aspects of the practices.

Paralleling art and sport in the context of doing and watching brings into view similarities and differences, different from those brought out in the historical comparison of their development as seen in chapter three. The roles of the contemporary artist and athlete appear more similar to each other than the roles of their audiences. Being physically in the center of the action connects these otherwise dissimilar practices. In addition, focusing on the participant's perspective stresses the importance of the everyday practice that prepares both the artist and the athlete for the public parts of their vocations. The polarity of the hidden daily actions and the festive public exhibitions and competitions are the key elements that are shared both by the artist's and athlete's views. In addition to these similarities, looking at the practices of art and sport from the maker's perspective reveals that even though there is a single protagonist, she is not alone, but supported by a wider network of professionals.

The audience's view of art and sport contains more differences. Watching sport is more of a social action than contemplating art. Even though one might attend a sporting event alone, the bleachers will be filled with like-minded individuals. Even if the event is perceived through TV or other media, it is a shared one – the awareness of a mass of people following the same unique event can't be avoided today – and the role of modern social media reinforces this feeling.[252]

The conduct of the art audience is more solitary and reserved, even conservative. The proper behavior one should

252 Similar awareness of a shared experience can be found in some internationally televised cultural events, for instance Live Aid at 1985, which reached a global audience of 1,9 billion, and its successors.

display in front of artworks was defined early on. Already in the first museums, the public was instructed to controlled manners, as the exhibition was a haven for art. Although the standards of behavior have been liberated since, the norm is that art is watched in silence, and if one wants to discuss the works, it is done in a low voice. Stopping in front of artwork is part of the good conduct of contemplating art, and touching the artworks is still strictly forbidden. Even in cases where touching as artwork is an intrinsic part of the work, part of the audience will find it hard to follow the artist's wishes. However, the situation is gradually changing, as the new art practices gain ground within the artworld. Artworks that encourage active participation, and especially communication among the audience, can make the art experience more shared, and thus more similar to the experience of watching sport.

# 6 • The Aesthetic Links







After the emergence of aesthetics as a discipline, its further development was closely connected to the newly formed category of art. The connection between aesthetics and art was reciprocal: while aesthetic focused mainly on the features of art, the emergence of the category of art was affected by the advent of the specific manners of attention, interpretation, and vocabulary that were used in the appreciation of art.[253] The close connection between the development of aesthetics and art confined aesthetics almost purely to the questions of art: from the early nineteenth century the discipline has been understood as the philosophy of art, dealing with the definition of fine arts, the qualities of art (beauty, sublime), or even metacritics, the philosophical inquiry dealing with the aspects of art criticism.[254]

The understanding of aesthetics as a philosophy of art constrained the development of aesthetics for nearly two centuries. Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's original idea of aesthetics as the discipline for *sensuous knowing* received little attention until the end of the twentieth century, when the field of aesthetics began to expand. The importance of aesthetics in the modern world has predominantly grown in two ways: by expanding the scope of aesthetics outside art and by the aestheticization processes taking place in contemporary culture, and the acceptance of the aesthetic foundations of our cognitive processes, truth, and ethics. Both current trends in the transformation of the discipline of aesthetics also justify exploring the relations between art and sport through aesthetics.[255]

Until recently, aesthetics outside art has been a subject of lesser interest. However, the aesthetics of the environment, the human body, and everyday life (costumes, gardens, wine) have existed as a minor strand of interest alongside that of art-aesthetics. Thomas Leddy has explored the development of aesthetics outside art, and has found that the aesthetics of everyday life has been at least mentioned on various occasions over the entire history of aesthetics. The early observations on aesthetics outside art were usually just passing remarks, but Leddy finds that Hume and Kant, for instance, have considered the qualities of aesthetics outside art. Moving closer to today, Leddy also cites Ralph Waldo Emerson's positive remarks about the aesthetic value of ordinary things, as

253 Mortensen 1997, 3-4, 96-97.

254 Stecker 2005, 1-2. Beardsley 1981, 6.

255 Welsch 1997, p. 1-3, 38.

well as Charles Baudelaire's and Walter Benjamin's enthusiasm for the aesthetic aspects of city life, which expands the scope of the early appreciation of aesthetics outside art.[256]

Outside the mainstream of aesthetic discussion, the ideas about aesthetics outside of art, as well as the aesthetics of the everyday, developed over time towards our contemporary understanding. For instance, in the late nineteenth century Jean-Marie Guyau explored ideas about the importance of aesthetics in everyday life, the connection between ethics and aesthetics, as well as the general scope of the aesthetic discipline, that are remarkably modern; for Guyau, the scope of aesthetics extends beyond art and beauty, play and entertainment. Aesthetics forms an essential part of life: "being alive is in itself pleasurable and aesthetic feeling which engages all our senses, which makes our sensuality and perception aesthetic pleasure in itself."[257] In addition, Guyay's view of aesthetics links aesthetics and ethics; the ethical choices in everyday life depend on aesthetic judgment of the situation, not predetermined rules. Guyau emphasizes the social condition of this judgment. A balanced judgment does not concern itself only with an individual, but also with the benefit to others.[258]

Although aesthetic phenomena outside art had previously been explored on a small scale, the first approach with a wider significance in applying aesthetics outside the realm of art was made by John Dewey in the 1930s.[259] His idea was to emphasize the concept of aesthetic experience, and to apply it to various phenomena outside the category of fine art. The aesthetic appropriation of non-art matters would result in a heightened aesthetic sensitivity, which would promote improvements in the quality of life. However, the proposal attained very little interest before the late twentieth century.[260] The first successful approach utilizing aesthetics outside art was directed towards the aesthetic appreciation of the environment. Starting from ideas similar to eighteenth century nature aesthetics, environmental aesthetics expanded towards a versatile understanding of the environment, where nature was only one possible environment. Environmental aesthetics opened the route for other approaches to various subjects; the study of the aesthetics of popular culture and numerous aspects of everyday life being the most notable areas of study. Currently, aesthetics is used to deal with various topics in contemporary culture, for instance the aesthetic aspects of politics, mobility, and human appearance. Today it is widely accepted that there is no special field of subjects that can be studied from an aesthetic vantage point, however some subjects are more rewarding.[261]

256 Leddy 2012, 22-25, 26 (Hume), 31-32 (Kant), 36, 39-40.

257 Kreft 2011, 78.

258 Kreft 2011, 78-79.

259 Dewey 2005 (1934).

260 Shusterman 2000 a, 3, 6, 13.

261 Ziff 1994 (1979). Shusterman 2012.





# The Impact of Postmodern

The idea of modernism emphasized clear and separate cultural practices, and well-defined objectives that were striven for within these practices, whereas contemporary culture gives priority to pluralistic approaches and goals, as well as to contradictory readings of their meanings. Even if it is sometimes argued that the cultural current is late modern, instead of postmodern, a continuation of modernism rather than the beginning of a new era, various ruptures in cultural practices have nevertheless since the late 1960s been designated with the prefix "post", indicating their departure from modernism. This change, which had started from the gradual development of modern tradition, became more articulated and theorized as "postmodern" first in literature, architecture, philosophy, and later in other arts as well as in culture in general.[262]

While theoretical discussion about postmodern exists within the theoretical approaches to sport, the new ideas have not affected the actual practice of sport. However, the framework of contemporary sport has adapted to the changes in the cultural environment, which exists today in a postmodern form. In addition, if the numerous physical cultures are inspected as a larger whole, the practices emerging outside the tradition of modern sport have brought postmodern tendencies into the realm of physical culture.

Many of the late twentieth century cultural phenomena are connected with a general exhaustion of the modern project, which had been a prevalent cultural tendency throughout the last century. The modern project is conceived of as the effort to finalize the differentiation of cultural practices, so that different cultural practices would be separated into their own compartments and could be advanced without a connection to other practices. The formation of art and sport was a good example of this tendency; they both formed their own worlds, which had created internal rules about the significant contents of their practices. They were in interaction with the surrounding culture and society and reflected its development, but through their own principles. From the beginning of the 1960s to the 1980s the situation gradually changed; various experiments in crossing over the previous borders became more frequent, until they joined the mainstream practice. The common goals of the practices became more unclear, until there was no longer a shared end within a practice, but various goals that were approached in multiple ways. While there was no further visible development of the modern project, a new kind of fragmented reality became visible. According to Shiner's view on the development of art, the changes taking place during the 1960s began the slow downfall of the second system of arts.[263]

Even though postmodernism was seen as the end for many previous cultural

262 Welsch1988, 14,16,18,23.

263 Lyotard 1984 (1979), 72, 76, 81. Tavares 2006. Jameson 1991, 25. Shiner 2001, 10, 303-304.

models, it also brought many novel possibilities to light. Instead of focusing on high culture alone, postmodern culture strives to value all kinds of cultural practices in spite of their previous status as high or low. The first part of Robert Venturi's, Denise Scott Brown's and Steven Izenourof's book *Learning from Las Vegas*, "A Significance for A&P Parking Lots, or Learning from Las Vegas"[264] is an exploration of architectural forms that had previously been thought of as banal and unworthy of serious analysis, which indicates the change in perspective. In postmodern the reality evolved into a state of fluidity, where an absolute certainty does not exist. Everything is in a state of suspension, and judgments and choices have to be made again and again as the context changes. Although postmodernism was only a brief and limited style in art, most visible in architecture, the postmodern period took over the modern. The diverse cultural transformations were seen as the symptoms and results of the end of the modern.[265]

Fredric Jameson connects the shift to postmodernism to the merging of aesthetic production with the production of commodities, and the power of capitalism as the prevailing ideology of the time. According to him, the rise of postmodernism was connected with the advance of capitalist ideology, as well as changes in society. The previous industrial society was transforming into a post-industrial one, into a consumer society. For Jameson, the plurality of postmodernism makes it not a period style with recognizable features, but a *cultural dominant* of the late twentieth century. Instead of a certain clear style, postmodern is visible as an attitude. Jameson finds the suspension of reality driving the focus on the surface, on superficial aesthetics.[266] However, from the same outset of suspended reality, Wolfgang Welsch has found the possibility for a deeper aesthetic understanding of reality, in the form of an epistemological aestheticization, where aesthetic perception determines our fundamental understanding and evaluation of the world as well as our orientation within it. According to Welsch, reality is "produced poietically, structured with fictional means, and in their whole mode of being of that floating and fragile nature which had traditionally been attested only to aesthetic phenomena and had only been considered possible with these".[267] Welsch's point of view is that the postmodern state of culture has made it possible to leave the stiff norms of modernism behind and look at the world with open eyes.[268]

264 Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenourof 1988 (1972).

265 Welsch 1991, 175.

266 Jameson 1991, 3-5.

267 Welsch 1997, 21.

268 Welsch 1997, 8, 21.





# The Significance of Aesthetics

The contemporary advent of aesthetics as a beneficial means for comprehending the world is linked to the decline of the fundamental truths that had, since early Christianity, guided the members of western societies in their relationship with their neighbors, their environment, and the world in general. The differentiation in European culture, as well as growing scientific knowledge, especially in natural sciences, shook many of the foundations of culture and rendered them obsolete: the importance of religion diminished, the concept of a humankind created by an omnipotent god lost its position as the center of the universe; accordingly, the absolute power of monarchs, as well as the rigid and hierarchical division of social orders (classes), gradually lost their significance. As a consequence, the foundations of the modern egalitarian culture were built on a secular basis, provided by natural sciences and reason instead of previously held ethereal truths based on religious beliefs and tradition. Despite this secularization of culture, the recently formed cultural category of art assumed a position in many ways similar to that which religion had held during the previous centuries; art had essentially a divine nature, and could reach truths beyond the normal scope of the senses.
This is one reason why the field of aesthetics was bound to art until the end of pure modernism, when art began to lose its divine status and turn back to the everyday world.[269]

During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the further loosening of the ties of the traditional social system, and the shaking of the previously solid scientific foundations by the advances of physics beyond Newtonian models, again shifted (western) culture's perception of values, its understanding of the world, and the position of humankind in the cosmos. Gradually, the idea that there is no solid basis to build our knowledge on, even in the most fundamental sciences, affected the whole culture – everything is based on floating truths, and there is no absolute certainty, and the most important principles have to be defined again and again in consideration of the current circumstances.[270] When there is no solid foundation, sensuous knowing is a viable option upon which to base decisions and values.[271] Even though the disappearance of solid foundations seems a contemporary phenomenon, it has a lengthy history as an undercurrent in our culture. Wolfgang Welsch traces the emergence of epistemological aesthetization, i.e. "aesthetics as a fundamental epistemological discipline"[272] to Immanuel Kant. According to Welsch, the human connection with reality, as well as human cognition, are aesthetically constituted. Because human understanding of the

269 Hopkins 2000, 104-105. Bourriaud 2002, 28.

270 Feyerabend 1980 (1975), 66-68.

271 Welsch 1997, 42-43.

272 Welcsh 1997, 38.

world is conveyed by the senses, it has an aesthetic basis, and our understanding of reality has an inevitably fictional and poeietic character.[273]

By the 1990s, aesthetics was regarded as a somewhat valid means for dealing with various issues. Wolfgang Welsch calls the new direction of aesthetics *aesthetics beyond aesthetics*, which stands for the detachment of aesthetics and art, and the active cultivation of aesthetic thinking outside the traditional boundaries of art and beauty. His conception of the expanded field of aesthetics understands aesthetics as a transdisciplinary discipline that can deal with "all questions concerning aisthesis". In the contemporary world, where everything is floating and contingent, in a state of suspension, aesthetic judgment forms a valid method for making choices.[274]

Welsch's ideas about employing aesthetics outside its traditional domain take a more concrete form when he starts to analyze the aesthetic features of contemporary thinking: the objective of his analysis is to clarify the various meanings connected to the general concept of aesthetics in contemporary thought, to shed light on the feature he calls *the semantic ambiguity of aesthetics*, the variation in uses of aesthetics and the variation of its point of reference. In addition to clarifying the contemporary, multifaceted understanding of aesthetics, Welsch attempts to unfold the reasons behind the significance of aesthetic thinking in the contemporary world. He sees the contemporary uses of aesthetics as analogous to Ludwig Wittgenstein's concept of language; the various uses of aesthetics form a family resemblance. Welsch's idea about the contemporary organization of aesthetics is layered in various dimensions. The aesthetic features function at several levels of which some are essential for aesthetic thinking and others affect on lower level, as underlying sensations of the aesthetic thought. The different uses of aesthetics do not necessarily share the same features, but there are *semantic elements* and *semantic groups* which are partially connected with overlaps, links, and transitions, which thus connect the various uses of aesthetics. [275]

According to Welsch, some features are shared by all the *semantic elements*, the defined aspects of aesthetics. The primary one is the *sensuous semantic group* that emphasizes the connection between the sensuous and the aesthetic, and at the same time introduces a division into two levels of sensuousness: the low level *vulgar sensuous* element and the higher *elevatory semantic element, w*here the latter, elevated and distanced sensuous forms the core of all aesthetic apprehension. Aesthetic appreciation requires sensuous and same time takes distance from it. Welsch defines these features, taken together, as the *aisthetic semantic element*. Even though both variations of sensuous belonging to the sensuous semantic group are associated with aesthetics in general, the elevatory semantic element contributes more to actual aesthetic inquiry.

Welsch furthermore discerns another parallel double-level feature in aesthetics; aesthetic experience is composed of two levels of sensing: the lower level of *sensation* and the distanced level of *perception*. Sensation is at some level aesthetic, but according to Welsch only as a *hedonistic semantic element*, related to pleasure and emotions.[276] While the sensation is focused on subjective experience, the bearing of aesthetic perception is observational and theoretical. When the theoretical stance is taken, the stimulus of aesthetic sensation is turned into a perception, a more objective analysis of the same impression, reflecting the same pleasure felt in the sensation.[277]

Whereas sensation is connected only to the hedonistic semantic element, Welsch sees various semantic elements having a connection with aesthetic perception as well as being linked with elevatory semantic element. In the context of conventional understanding of aesthetics, most important connections exist with *form- and proportion-related*, *theoreticistic* and *phenomenalistic* semantic elements. The form- and proportion-related semantic elements refer to the relations between the elements of the perceived phenomena or object, its connections, contrasts, and harmonies. The theoreticist semantic element is present in contemplation, treating an object or phenomenon from a theoretical orientation. The dedication the aesthetics of the appearance of the subject under perception forms the third semantic element connected with perception; the phenomenalistic semantic element.[278]

In addition to these semantic elements, which are connected somewhat closely to higher level features of aesthetics, Welsch states that various semantic elements belong within the scope of aesthetics because of their family resemblance, but not as clear subcategories.[279] These remaining semantic elements form various overlapping groups that are more or less connected to the semantic elements already described. The connections between these different semantic elements are not self-evident; they form a complex web that expands over the numerous uses of aesthetics today.

While the various semantic elements introduce the extent of the possible applications and contexts of aesthetics in contemporary culture, they still cannot reveal the real importance of aesthetics in modern thought, and consequently the effects of aesthetization. Aesthetics is routinely thought to concern itself only with

273 Welsch 1997, 38-39.

274 Welsch 1997, 38; 48-49.

275 Welsch 1997, 8-10.

276 In my opinion, Richard Shusterman presents new methods for analytic approach with his somaesthetics, and thus brings the sensation at least partially into aesthetics proper. See Shusterman 2008, 23.

277 Welsch 1997, 10-11.

278 Welsch 1997, 10-11.

279 The subjective semantic element, linked with the subjective nature of aesthetic perception; the reconciliative semantic element, related with the manner the objects of perception are joined to each other; the callistic semantic element, associated with the aesthetic as synonymous with beauty; the cosmetic and poietic semantic elements, connected to skills, production and the use of materials; the artistic semantic element, the art-related meanings of aesthetics; the semantic element "conforming with aesthetics", aesthetics as according with the theory of aesthetics;the "sensitive" semantic element, associated with a person's ability to sense something very sensitively; the "aesthetistic" semantic element, connected to an aesthetism taken to perfection; and the virtual semantic element that denotes aesthetics as the guiding model for the relationship towards reality. Welsch 1997,12-15.

surface qualities. However, in addition to these surface level qualities, aestheticization also takes place on a deep level that affects the foundations of our relationship with reality. While *surface aesthetization* is more visible in our daily life, the latter *epistelemological aesthetization* has more profound consequences for the basis of living in the world. Surface aesthetization takes place on the visible surfaces of modern life: it is present in all the embellishments of urban environments, the styling and beautification of various objects from consumer goods to human beings, and in the creation of new kinds of experiences in order to entertain people.[280]

Mike Featherstone describes a similar development as the aesthetization of everyday life. According to him, the aesthetization of everyday life is visible in three contexts: it takes place in connection with the lowering of the boundary between art and everyday life, in shaping one's life into an artwork, and in the overloading of everyday life with signs and images that is taking place in contemporary culture. In the first case, the aesthetization has taken place in art since the early twentieth century, in the context of dada, surrealism, and other avant-garde movements, and again during the 1960s as a reaction to the institutionalization of modernism. The second manifestation of aesthetization, turning one's life into a work of art, has a long history. Featherstone traces its beginnings back to the nineteenth century dandyism. Since then, the idea has surfaced regularly on various occasions, for instance in the writings and life of Oscar Wilde, Balzac, and Baudelaire. In the late twentieth century, the idea of life as artwork was emphasized by Michel Foucault. The third instance of the aesthetization of the everyday comes close to Welsch's ideas. Even though Featherstone emphasizes images, he connects the phenomenon to commercial culture and the transformation of the citizen into a consumer. The abundance of images serves similar ends as the embellishing of the urban environment, in order to make them attractive to experience-hungry people and to convince them to consume their time and funds.[281]

Welsch's grim view is that the character of surface aesthetization is mostly superficial and hedonistic: the central values are "pleasure, amusement, enjoyment without consequences". Aestheticized contemporary culture is steered by the guidelines of experience and entertainment. The most visible manifestations of surface aesthetization are often driven by commercial purposes, turning people into consumers. According to Welsch, this embellishment actualizes most often in the course of revitalizing city centers, when building new grandiose shopping malls, frequently in connection with transforming run-down quarters into lively commercial areas. The results can be stunning: for instance in the old city center of Birmingham in central England, the contrast between the futuristic curved walls of the Bull Ring Shopping center, covered with shiny aluminum disks, and the surrounding rough industrial buildings could not be greater. In addition to the surfeits in the commercial building zones, surface aesthetization has consequences that affect our lives more deeply. One can always avoid shopping centers, but the artificial aging of beautified articles, for instance, typical of surface aesthetization, cannot be avoided.[282]

Featherstone's emphasis on images brings forth one more aspect of aesthetization that cannot be escaped: today's cityscape is flooded with all kinds of advertisement, trademarks, and other commercial information. The extent of commercial imagery is so great that it is easy to become blind to it. The commercial signs transform into a natural part of the buildings, and the advertisements on the internet form a natural element alongside our emails and everyday news.[283]

In addition to this aesthetization of environments, experiences, and objects, human bodies are also subject to aesthetization. Richard Shusterman terms the growing emphasis on personal appearance that is today enhanced using various methods the *somatic turn*. The concentration on one's appearance is not limited to clothes and other wearable decoration, and the enhancement of personal appearance often focuses on the body. Traditional sports and exercise methods are outmoded by specialized programs. The body is dissected, and the parts that require improvement are subjected to special training to perfect them. When the physical exercises do not produce the desired looks, plastic surgery is used. The surface techniques used for bodily improvement are not the only ones that have gained in popularity: techniques concentrating on heightened bodily sensitivity, yoga, and various meditative practices, for instance, have also become more popular than ever before. Shusterman connects the contemporary dedication to the body to the "social conformity" and "heightened individualism" present in today's affluent societies, as well as the loss of religious sentiment. Furthermore, Shusterman sees the increasing interest in bodily aesthetics coming at least partially from the response to constant interaction with computers and other technical devices that estrange us from everyday bodily experiences.[284]

However, the negative consequences of surface aestheticization that Welsch and Featherstone emphasize are not the only truths; they simply concentrate on the typical signs of aestheticization processes in the late twentieth century. Yrjö Sepänmaa sees the positive potential in surface aestheticization. For him, the aim of the cultural trend of aestheticization is connected with pursuing a good life. The attention to the aesthetic aspects in human culture will produce good effects, if the appropriate values are taken into account. The values of aestheticization are not fixed, but the choice of the values affects the result of the process. For instance, aesthetic environmental culture does not mean anything more than arranging the relationship with the environment in accordance with the concepts of beauty. The values that govern these environmental choices are associated with aesthetic values. If economic values

280 Welsch 1997, 2, 38.

281 Featherstone 2007, 65-66.

282 Welsch 1997, 2-4.

283 Featherstone 2007, 66-67.

284 Shusterman 2000 b, 154-157.

overpower the aesthetic ones, the aesthetical quality of the outcome might suffer, but if the values are balanced a positive result can be achieved from the aestheticization process.[285]

Eventually, Welsch suggests that the recent growth in the significance of aesthetics lies in the comprehension of reality through consciously aesthetic considerations, an epistelemological aestheticization that affects the deep-seated structures of the human mind and the foundations of the culture; the sensuous knowing that is the only track between human thought and the reality we are immersed in.[286] This epistelemological aestheticization takes place in the foundational aestheticization of knowledge, truth, and reality, and it has nothing to do with surface aestheticization. Welsch traces the idea of epistelemological aesthetization back to Baumgarten and Kant in the eighteenth century, and Nietzsche in the nineteenth century. The idea of the aesthetic basis of cognition has been more accepted during the late twentieth century, especially in the philosophy of science. The attempt to find the fundamental truths beyond the laws of nature has gradually revealed that there is no firm ground to be found; new scientific breakthroughs have always revealed new complexities beyond the limits of previous knowledge.[287]

The contemporary foundations for epistelemological aestheticization can be located through the cognitive sciences: Lakoff and Johnson demonstrate how the three basic findings in cognitive sciences, the embodied mind, the cognitive unconscious, and metaphorical thought, make the idea of objective, disembodied science as well as the goal of finding fundamental truths impossible. We are embodied beings, physically engaged with our environment, so scientific observations are reliant on human perception and cognitive faculty. The fact that scientific observations extend today beyond human capacity results from the development of instruments that extend the scope of observations and assist in the manipulation of the gathered information. However, the mechanical observations made with these instruments do not turn into the results of science without human interaction.[288] Moreover, the truth acquired through scientific procedures has an embodied nature: according to Lakoff and Johnson, the formation of truth is linked to our everyday experience. These experiences lead us to find correlations between our perception and environment that contribute to the primary metaphors. The primary metaphors form the basis of further thought, including abstract concepts and scientific theorizing.[289]

In addition to the impossibility of finding solid foundations, several scientific discoveries are based on aesthetic arguments, and have even been found using aesthetic premises. Developing scientific theories can be connected with the use of imagination, and discovering them can even happen in an artistic fashion, using imagination and aesthetic judgment.[290] A revealing example used by Welsch is the discovery of DNA's structure; James Watson confesses that he was able to construct the structure only because he chose to look for an aesthetic solution among all those that were theoretically open. Epistelemological aestheticization takes place across the academic disciplines: from the philosophy of science and analytic philosophy to hermeneutics, semiology, and sociology, as the hope for fundamental truths disappears, the aesthetic character of cognition is recognized as the basis for science's connection to reality.[291]

285 Sepänmaa 2012, section 3 .

286 Welsch 1997,38-49.

287 Welsch 1997, 44-45.

288 Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 90-91.

289 Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 128.

290 Feyerabend 1980 (1975), 166-167.

291 Welsch 1997, 44-45.

# Aesthetic Experience

The contemporary understanding of the scope of aesthetics advocated by Welsch emphasizes the aesthetic experience that plays a foundational role in John Dewey's pragmatist aesthetics. The main contribution of Dewey's aesthetics is giving the central position to the aesthetic experience initiated by art or other features of the environment, instead of concentrating on the aesthetic qualities of artworks. For Dewey, the aesthetic experience as *an experience* with a clearly noticeable start and end. In the aesthetic experience each successive part of the experience runs together without disturbances; the experience forms a unity, and in the end there will be a consummating phase that fulfills the experience, bringing it to its natural end. The aesthetic experience is sensed as *an experience,* unlike the regular experiences within the everyday humdrum. There is no exact boundary between normal and aesthetic experiences; they form a continuity, where some experiences are more distinctly aesthetic than others.[292] According to Dewey, all human contact with their environment takes place through a constant experience, but most of that experience remains in the background.[293] However, the aesthetic experience rises clearly above those experiences that constitute the basis of living in the world. For Dewey, the aesthetic is never really disinterested, the sensing human being is always in the middle, and there is no possibility to detach oneself from the interaction with the environment.[294] The aesthetic experience is without exception a first person experience; one is always involved in the particular experience. The experience takes place for one person, at certain time, and it cannot be either duplicated or even fully verbalized.

Another difference between Dewey's aesthetics and other aesthetic theories is its independence from the definition of art. His aesthetics do not require a special category for art; the source for aesthetic experience can be anything that raises the magnitude of experience above the everyday fragmented humdrum, and provides an experience that forms an organic unity. The traditional fine arts form only one possible source for aesthetic experiences, and Dewey sees possibilities for aesthetic

292 Dewey 2005 (1934), 37-38, 45-47.

293 Dewey 2005 (1934), 15-16.

294 Also Shusterman 2000 a, 6-7.

experiences in, for example, jazz music, movies, and sport.[295]

The whole construction of Dewey's aesthetics differs from most approaches to aesthetics; instead of trying to define art and the aesthetic qualities that make something artistic, he prefers to see the reality as a continuity, where some features and creatures provide more aesthetic experiences than others. There is no aesthetic borderline that separates art from other parts of life, just a socially and historically constructed border. Artistic work is a habit of action within one practice, developed within European culture. If the difference between art as a cultural practice and as a source of aesthetic experience is acknowledged, and the aesthetic practices (and the expressions of the aesthetic) outside the practice of fine art are given their proper value, aesthetics will function better in improving the quality of life. Some practices are more suitable for producing aesthetic experiences, but the effect of an individual action cannot be judged beforehand.

Consequently, Dewey's understanding of a work of art deviates from the established convention. He separates the work of art and the art object. The latter is just the object, usually made by an artist, and it functions as a container, as a possible source for a work of art. The work of art is realized in the interaction between the perceiver and the art object, the work of art is created again and again when the art object produces an aesthetic experience. The emergence of a work of art depends on the quality of the art object and the vantage point of the viewer. If the art object is bad, or if the viewer does not concentrate on the interaction, or if she comes from a different culture, there will be no work of art present, as the interaction is flawed.[296]

Dewey sees aesthetics, especially the aesthetic experience, as a tool for improving the quality of life, and thus opposes "the museum concept of art" that prevents expanding the use of aesthetics outside art. In place of the traditional fine arts, he wants to expand the conception of art and thus combine art and aesthetics as an integral part of everyday life: when the aesthetic experience is not tied to objects or immaterial works produced within and according to the rules of the category/system of fine art, the aesthetic experience is liberated to enhance the quality of everyday life.[297] For Dewey, this was an idea he wanted to promote, but today it is becoming reality.

## Aesthetics in the Expanded Field

Parallel with the increased understanding of the importance of aesthetics in our connection with the world, the practice of aesthetics has detached itself from its solid connection with art and approached other areas. The first well-established expansion of aesthetics outside the realm of fine arts was in the aesthetic approach to the environment, where the ideas stemmed from the eighteenth century's aesthetics of nature and romantic appreciation of nature. In environmental aesthetics there is no single, highlighted feature that could be the focus of aesthetic analysis; instead, it is a whole multisensory experienced environment, with the observer as a part of it. Even though visual and audible features play an important role, one still feels the wind, smells the air, and can even use taste while inspecting the features of the environment. All of these sensations together form a significant and inseparable entity.

Unlike in artworks, there are no predefined intentions or boundaries for the observed environment. Neither is the environment in a fixed state, everything is in flux. The aesthetic appreciation of the environment balances the direct sensory experience of the environment and the experience that is affected by previous information about the site, as well as the part that is beyond our direct sensing.[298] Early environmental aesthetics was largely animated by the rising ecological consciousness, but soon the environment was understood as a wider concept, and aesthetic inquiries were directed towards the qualities of all kind environments, ranging from famous landscapes to urban areas and domestic environments.[299] Aesthetic appreciation is not usually the primary function or reason for the existence or creation of these environments, objects, events, or features. If the objects or environments are man-made, they frequently have practical reasons for creating them that overpower the aesthetic aspects. The function or reason for the existence of natural subjects is more hidden, but still present. Their function is being a part of the larger ecosystem, to support other living things. In general, a wider knowledge about the function of non-art subjects shifts their aesthetic appreciation – just as a functionally fit practical object appears more aesthetically pleasing, so a soggy wetland is more agreeable when its function in the ecosystem is known.[300]

Since the emergence of environmental aesthetics, the scope of aesthetics has expanded from concentrating on special art-like objects or features and the ambience of special landscapes to the aesthetic appreciation of the normal, or even the modest, things that we constantly face in our lives – finding aesthetic features in places and situations that were previously thought aesthetically insignificant. The field of everyday aesthetics concentrates on the aesthetics of ordinary phenomena and experiences without an immediate connection with arts or special natural environments. The weight of these mundane matters is greater than it first looks: Yuriko Saito points out how seemingly insignificant everyday matters do have serious consequences that can be moral, social, political, or environmental. Firstly, the common everyday aesthetic preferences towards beautiful, spectacular, and special features obscure the meaning of the aesthetically insignificant objects, features, and issues. This becomes evident in questions about environmental

295 Dewey 2005 (1934), 4, 65-66.

296 Dewey 2005 (1934), 108-109.

297 Dewey 2005 (1934), 4, 9-10.

298 Parsons and Carlson 2008, 126-127.

299 Carlson 1994. Berleant 1995.

300 Parsons and Carlson 2008, 126-127.

protection: it is much easier to protect species and environments that are beautiful and spectacular than those that are insignificant or even repellent. Secondly, everyday aesthetic preferences affect the environmental planning, building, and production of consumer goods. The products that are manufactured with less damage to the environment or the people making them are easily overlooked because of their aesthetics. For instance, recycled paper and environmentally friendly printer inks are seen deficient when compared to normal paper and regular printer inks. Similarly, wind turbines are resisted for their effect on the aesthetics of the landscape. The fact that the electricity produced by wind is cleaner does not matter. Even though the aesthetic quality of everyday objects and features would not be significant enough to justify their study, the consequences of the everyday aesthetic preferences are far-reaching, and for this reason the study of everyday aesthetics is meaningful.[301] While art and environment oriented aesthetics concentrate on a limited group of subjects, the list of possible subjects for everyday aesthetics is vast. Thomas Leddy provides a basic list: "personal appearance, ordinary housing design, interior decoration, workplace aesthetics, sexual experience, appliance design, cooking, gardening, hobbies, play, appreciation of children's art projects".[302] Naturally, Leddy's list is not complete, but provides some understanding about the scope of everyday aesthetics. Generally, the outset of everyday aesthetics is the personal position: *my everyday now*. Everyone is the sole observer of their everyday life, even though we share much of our everyday life with our family, and even with strangers living in a similar culture. The basis of the everyday is in the routines that find their form from personal preferences and mandatory tasks. Although routines are important in everyday life, there is also change. Some of the changes in everyday life are gradual ones that slowly transform the everyday life without disturbing the routine, and some are sudden ones that break the everyday routine for some time. The changes can be positive, such as parties and other social occasions or learning a new skill, but also negative, such as illness and accidents. The usual everyday life that consists of various routines, interactions with people, objects, and environmental conditions is mainly regular, but still in a constant flux and subject to abrupt changes. My everyday will certainly be different next year, but it can change totally tomorrow.[303]

Detaching aesthetics from single objects required a totally new attitude towards sensing the research subject, but when the object of aesthetic interest is not distinct or special by any measure, the terms of appreciation and evaluation have to change once again. The previous terminology used to analyze art, as well as the reasons for aesthetic consideration, are not applicable when the studied features and their qualities are mundane: the qualities used in the context of art do not really apply while dealing with the features of everyday life. Instead of the beautiful and sublime, everyday situations call for characteristics of another kind. The terminology is not settled, but the terms connected with everyday aesthetics have various meanings, and only some of those have an aesthetic connotation. Leddy explores a number of different phrases and their different usages in relation to the everyday aesthetic and art related aesthetics. His study shows that words commonly used in everyday aesthetic evaluations are not usually appreciated in the context of traditional aesthetics. For instance, expressions like *nice* or *fun* have limited use in art-related aesthetics, but are found appropriate in the context of everyday aesthetic judgments.[304]

Although the terminology used in everyday aesthetics would be too simple to use in the context of art, the qualities the terms used can be complicated. Saito exemplifies this complexity with the qualities of everyday aesthetics as pairs like *clean* and *messy*, *neat* and *dirty*, *organized* and *disorganized*. The pairs form focal qualities in everyday life, where the first quality presents the desired state, while the latter is the state that requires action. The qualities that call for action do not exist in the context of art, but are featured frequently in everyday life. In normal life, disinterested observation exists only momentarily, and in most cases an observation results in an action, an action that is an everyday concern for most people. In addition, the qualities of everyday aesthetics are context dependent; a pile of unwashed laundry does not turn a home into a messy one when it is in the laundry basket, but when dumped in the middle of a room it would. Similarly, wild vegetation in one's front lawn is deemed weeds, but in a meadow the same dandelions are flowers.[305]

Even if there exist no definite aesthetic experiences in an average everyday, there are still aesthetics that can be worth study, and that can promote our understanding of the world we live in. Sherri Irvin writes about the pervasiveness of the aesthetic in the ordinary experience, meaning that one cannot escape aesthetic experiences in even the most modest encounters in everyday life. The incident might not be a full aesthetic experience in the Deweyan sense, but despite the modest sensations involved, the connection to everyday reality has an aesthetic origin.[306]

Everyday life is our most omnipresent environment, and thus its importance is great even though it usually just forms the background for our life's more colorful events. The subject that is not spectacular might be still worth attention, even enjoyment, if it can form a perfect background for the everyday life, and changing it would worsen living conditions or be environmentally harmful. Sometimes, the aesthetic preferences of an aspect of everyday life might need reconsideration. Saito uses the example of a suburban lawn, which signifies an accomplished middle-class lifestyle: a perfect lawn is thought to be aesthetically superior because of its neat and organized outlook. However, it becomes aesthetically problematic when the detriments of maintaining the lawn are taken into account. Because the lawn is an artificial ecosystem in most environments, it needs

301 Saito 2007, 57, 58, 61, 65-67.

302 Leddy 2005, 3.

303 Naukkarinen 2013, sections 2-4.

304 Leddy 2012, 151, 185.

305 Saito 2007, 152-153, 155.

306 Irvin 2008, 30-31.

constant care such as watering, treating with herbicides, pesticides, insecticides, and fertilizers as well as regular, usually motorized mowing. In most cases leaving the original ecosystem untouched, or just slightly altering it, would be ecologically – and aesthetically – appropriate. One's neighbors might see the traditional lawn as a neat and organized option, but when considering the environment as an aesthetic whole, the yard with a more indigenous ecosystem of natural hays is more desirable. Sometimes, usually in very dry areas, even substituting all traditional vegetation with a natural desert ecosystem could be an option.[307]

At the same time as the expansion of aesthetics towards the environment and the everyday was occurring, changes taking place in the conception of art also opened up new possibilities for aesthetics. Today, art is not conceived of solely as high culture; the more common expressions of cultural life are also thought of as arts, and thus worth closer study. The borderline between the category of art and other activities has become more porous than it was during most of the twentieth century. Cultural forms that have previously thought of as vulgar and pedestrian are now considered aesthetically intriguing. For example, Richard Shusterman has found hip-hop and country music worthy of a serious analysis, which revealed advanced techniques and complex messages in them. The so called lower arts have been revealed as not lower, but only popular. The themes dealt with in popular forms of art, as well as the manner and delicacy with which these themes are treated, do not need to be compared against the high arts; it is just enough to accept that the aesthetic preferences within the practices are different. Both high and popular arts contain weak or mediocre artworks that do not fulfill the aesthetic expectations, but there is no essential difference in the aesthetic level of the good works. Today, there is no fundamental difference between traditional high art and popular artforms; all the new areas and forms of life or new kinds of art need new criteria for aesthetic analysis, and the discovery of new kinds of aesthetic qualities and experiences in them enriches the potential of aesthetics in other categories.[308]

Many of the new subjects within aesthetics are connected, not only by a common derivation from environmental aesthetics, but also by their ideas about aesthetic experience. Even when studying separate works, they challenge the traditional ideas of disinterested contemplation and the purposelessness of an art object. The observer of the environmental or everyday phenomenon is literally immersed in her subject of study, and much of popular culture is not just contemplated but fully and bodily experienced, by feeling the live performance or dancing with the music.[309]

Until recently, vision and hearing have dominated aesthetics, but here the situation is also changing. The variety of potential aesthetic analyses expands when other senses are taken

307 Saito 2007, 85.

308 Shusterman 2000 b, 60, 76. Ryynänen 2005, 164.

309 See Kupfer 2003. Shusterman 2000 a, 184, 204.





into consideration.[310] Probably the most prominent and advanced approach to the territory of the other senses is somaesthetics, introduced by Richard Shusterman. Shusterman introduced this new discipline in order to concentrate on the felt experience, and even more radically the felt experience of one's own body.[311]

Along with introducing a new field to aesthetics and analyzing the experiences of the body, Shusterman has further objectives for somaesthetics. In addition to *analytic* somaesthetics, which aims at analyzing somatic experiences, he introduces the *pragmatic* and *practical* somaesthetics, where the first means proposing specific methods for somatic improvement and their comparative evaluation, and the latter is the actual practice of somatic exercises striving for somatic self-improvement. By adding a practical dimension to aesthetics, somaesthetics performs a radical re-evaluation of an established academic practice.[312]

In addition to the tripartite division into analytical, pragmatic, and practical branches, each somaesthetic approach can exist in three modes: *representational, experiential,* or *performative*. Shusterman emphasizes that this division is not a rigid one, but the modes should be seen as dominant tendencies, where the representational and experiential modes form an opposite pair that are still closely connected. The representational mode is associated with visible somatic expression, dieting and bodybuilding for example, or even getting a new haircut, while the experiential mode correlates with the felt somatic experience. The performative mode implies the objective of the somaesthetic practice in connection with striving for bodily strength, skill, and health. However, the performative mode can be assimilated into the dominant mode (representational or experiential). Even though the somaesthetic approach suggests concentrating on first person experiences, it can be practiced for others. For example, a doctor or therapist applies somatic methods to their patients.[313]

310 Brady 2005 and Kuehn 2005.

311 Shusterman 1999, 299.

312 Shusterman 2008, 23-24, 29.

# Contemporary Art and Aesthetics

The previous sections unfold the recent expansion of the field of aesthetics: the change of aesthetics in connection to the realm of art. Aesthetics, however, is not the only practice that has changed; the category of arts has also transformed over recent decades. The previously autonomous field of art has opened up; new methods and techniques adopted into the field of art have changed both artworks and artistic work. In general, the practice of art has moved towards other cultural practices: the gap between art and other practices created by the emergence of the category of fine art is not closed, but today there are many ways to cross it.

313 Shusterman 2008, 26-28.

The movement takes place both ways: artists are looking for new and interesting ways of realizing new kinds of visions, or starting new artistic processes, and many professionals outside art are using the same methods as artists, but present the results in a different context. Along with the traditional artworks, there are works that can be difficult to distinguish from everyday objects – if the artwork even contains any kind of distinguishable object. In addition to museums and galleries, artworks are exhibited outside the traditional forums.

The majority of the contemporary artworks follow the logic inherited from the beginning of the modern system of art, but a growing number of art professionals try to move their practice closer to everyday life. The new working methods and kinds of artistic processes challenge the traditional art-aesthetics. For example, Rirkrit Tiravanija's installation art, based on offering noodle-soup to exhibition visitors,[314] or Superflex's free shop project in Helsinki (2010-2011), where some customers in regular shops got their purchases for free.[315] Tiravanija's work brings a non-art event into an art museum, while Superflex's project is a new type of public intervention that also breaks the conventional rules of commerce.

The aesthetics of these works draw near to environmental aesthetics and everyday aesthetics. The works are not exactly framed entities, but events that are simultaneously mundane and out of the ordinary. They are multisensory, low key experiences that tickle one's cognition as much as the senses. Unlike traditional artworks, paintings for instance, they do not exist without actual and active participation (as opposed to the passive participation of contemplating a painting). While painting retains its character as artwork when stored, works like Tiravanija's installation or Superflex's free shop can be preserved only as documentation of the events.

A growing number of contemporary artists utilize processes analogous to those of Tiravanija and Superflex, which makes the approaches used in the contexts of environmental aesthetics, everyday aesthetics, and other fields outside fine art suitable for their evaluation. For instance, the ecological background information utilized in environmental aesthetics can be replaced by the appropriate information needed for the current artwork. The background information can be knowledge about social conventions, like serving food to guests and habits connected with eating together, or the economic conventions of buying goods and the capitalist and monetary systems that run the modern world. Having or obtaining this information is not compulsory, but it makes the (aesthetic) experience more meaningful and assists in understanding the meaning of the work.

Together with the metamorphosis of art, artistic work has changed; an artist's work is no longer confined to painting, sculpting, or executing works on paper only. Neither do all artists require a traditional studio in order to execute their works. The expansion of artistic methods has transformed the experience of artistic work too. While a considerable portion of artistic work is planning, contacting people, attending meetings, writing, even writing computer code, the experience of the work must be different. Even though the work is artistic work, it does not produce art-related experiences similar to traditional direct contact with materials, where the artist shaped and experienced the artwork simultaneously. The new mode of artistic work separates the artistic work from the continuous art related experiences. Where the work produces art related experiences only for short periods of time, the aesthetics of artistic work start to take on the qualities of everyday aesthetics, especially if the concept of everyday proceeds from everyone's personal position: *my everyday now,* everyday transforms from a general to a particular, and thus covers all possible everydays – even the most exceptional ones.[316]

In artistic work, the aesthetic is manifested as sensuous knowing; there is no absolute predetermined goal for the artwork. Even though the artist has a certain intention, she can (and will) make adjustments to the work en route. There is no rule that steers the adjustments; they are made by judging the current state of the work – by sensuous knowing.

314 Bourriaud 2002 (1998), 25.

315 IHME Edition 2010 – Free Shop, The website of IHME Contemporary Art Festival, http://www.ihmeproductions.fi/en.php?k=16243, accessed 17.3. 2011.

316 Naukkarinen 2013.





# The Aesthetic and Artistic in Sport

The aesthetics concentrating specifically on sport form a special case of aesthetic discourse. Sport is mentioned often when the possible applications of aesthetics outside art are discussed. Already John Dewey connected sport to the aesthetic by linking the aesthetic to the bodily interaction between a living thing and her environment, instead of the mental faculty only.[317] The contemporary discussion about the aesthetics of sport began in the late 1960s, when the possible artistic, and subsequently aesthetic, features of sport were brought up in various articles. Today, the discussion of the aesthetic in sport does not concentrate on the presence of the aesthetic in sport, but on the qualities of the aesthetic in sport. The question of artistic features in sport, however, remains open.

During the first decades after the emergence of modern sport, the aesthetic dimension of sport was not considered important or meaningful at all. Academic discussion about the aesthetics of sport was virtually nonexistent until the latter half of the twentieth century. Some manifestations of the aesthetic attitude towards sport have existed in art, but they have been more or less sporadic: sport has been one possible source of inspiration

317 Dewey 2005 (1934). For instance, 21-23.

for artists, but it never became a common theme within the visual arts. The most usual manifestations of the aesthetic in early sports were the memorial statues to successful athletes; however, their artistic quality varies greatly. An example of good artistic quality, combined with a typical presentation and style of such a monument, is the statue of Paavo Nurmi by Wäinö Aaltonen. The statue combines the limitations and possibilities of the aesthetic expression of sports in the early twentieth century art very well – as well as the current understanding about sport amongst artists. Sport was looked at from the outside, and an athlete represented an exotic subject for art similar to that of a skilled dancer; he represented the potential implicit in every human being.

Perhaps the most important, although dubious in several aspects, expression of the aesthetic elements in sport during the first half of the twentieth century was Leni Riefenstahl's film *Olympia* documenting the 1936 Berlin Olympics, from the year 1938. In addition to documenting the Olympic Games, a large part of Riefenstahl's film concentrated on the presentation of the excellence of human bodies in motion.[318]

The contemporary discussion about aesthetics in sport started reasonably late - its emergence in the Anglo-American world can be traced to the 1960s.[319] During the 1970s, it became a more established but still not very common topic. The aesthetics of sport was addressed mainly within the discussion about the philosophy of sport, which was not a widespread subject either. Development of the academic discussion since the mid-1970s has been lingering, and often mixed with other topics related to aesthetics, for instance environmental aesthetics and the aesthetics of popular culture. Interest in the aesthetics of sport has recently grown again after some decades of only sporadic interest.[320]

The early debate focused mostly on the existence and meaningfulness of the aesthetic dimension in sport and concentrated almost solely on the qualities of modern competitive sport. Because of the narrow understanding of sport and the comprehension of aesthetics as the philosophy of art, the discussion was sometimes rather disoriented. Regardless of skeptical tones about combining aesthetics and sport, the question of the aesthetic aspects of sport was thought to be an important theme.[321] The earliest texts already contained many topics that have retained their relevance in the contemporary aesthetics of sport. These central aspects of sport aesthetics have been brought forth and treated frequently.

In the early discussion, three main tendencies regarding the relationship between the aesthetics and sport can be found. Some scholars taking part in the discussion thought that the aesthetic attitude or thinking should have no place in sport. For them, sport was above all about testing the limits of human performance, fierce competition for victory, and breaking records, and any concentration on aesthetics meant a departure from these central values. For instance, Paul Ziff argued very strongly against research on the aesthetic dimension of sport in the first issue of the *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*:

"Research devoted to the aesthetics of sport can accomplish nothing. There is nothing to be accomplished. Worse it would not only contribute to the vaunted dreariness of aesthetics it could serve to delay even impede other possibly significant research."[322]

Although even Ziff admits that some sports, such as gymnastics, have an aesthetic aspect, he almost simultaneously judges the aesthetic aspect as having an inconsequential, ancillary role to play in the sport. According to him, even in gymnastics, which many consider as a fundamentally aesthetic sport, it is mechanical efficiency and strength which are central.[323]

An opposite view to this perspective was formed by those scholars who thought that sport has an aesthetic dimension similar to art, and that it can be meaningful in the context of sport, or even that beneficial applications of the aesthetic dimension of sport could be found. In the early discussion, many of the members in this group wanted to contrast or even parallel sport and art. Louis Arnaud Reid, one of the earliest writers about the aesthetic in sport, ends up claiming that there are sports that have artistic elements, but he is reluctant to classify these sports, e.g. figure skating, diving, and gymnastics, straightforwardly as art. [324] In the very first article of *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport,* Paul G. Kuntz finds a great similarity between sport and art, and admits having experiences resembling those obtained from art while watching a particularly impressive sporting event.[325]

However, most of the writers supported the third tendency, which stays in the middle ground and admits that there is an aesthetic dimension in sport, but that it is a trivial matter and has very little to do with the real values of sport. Reid, who advocated for the existence artistic elements in sport, also thought that the aesthetic and artistic qualities of

318 *Olympia, Parts I & II*, directed by Leni Riefenstahl 1938, Germany. 218 minutes.

319 The first article I have found and read, "Sport, Aesthetic and Art" by Louis Arnaud Reid, was published in 1970. He mentions some earlier publications and conference papers about aesthetic in sport, for example a paper by E. Jokl from 1964, an article "Sport and P.E. as Means of Aesthetic Education" by W.J Anthony, and a conference on aesthetics and sport held in the University of Salford in the United Kingdom in 1968 or 1969.

320 For instance, Journal of the Philosophy of Sport dedicated its issue (2012) 39:2 to aesthetics of sport.

321 For instance, the first volume of the Journal of the Philosophy of Sport in 1974 was dedicated to aesthetics. Also, the British Journal of Aesthetics published some early articles about aesthetics in sport.

322 Ziff 1974, 93.

323 Ziff 1974, 101, 103. (Notice the sudden change in Ziff's thinking, visible when one compares this article to his well-known "Anything Viewed" just five years later).

324 Reid, 1970, p.258.

325 Kuntz 1974, 28.

games and sport are by-products – both for the participants and even the most aesthetically-minded observer, if they are really interested in sports or games as such. David Best has a similar perspective on aesthetics, and believes that sport can be watched with an aesthetic attitude, but that the aesthetic experience is subordinate to the efficiency and the success of the performance. Furthermore, he thinks that the quality of the aesthetic in sport is dependent on the qualities of the sport and the perceiver's predilections. For example, Best cannot find anything positive in the aesthetics of race walking, while he finds aesthetics possibilities in weight lifting.[326]

The early discussion thus suffered from various problems in reconciling aesthetics and sport. Aesthetics, and the aesthetic attitude towards sport, were seen as a threat to the original nature of sport. For example, Paul Weiss (in Kuntz 1974) emphasizes the struggle for the best possible performance as the most important aspect of sport: "he who does not try to make maximal use of his body is playing at, not in a sport". [327] The result was more important than the style or manner of achieving it, as long as the ethical values of sport were not (openly) violated.

The major cause of the problems in combining aesthetics and sport was the prevailing understanding about both sport and aesthetics. During the 1960s and 1970s, sport still remained very close to the original ideals of modern sport as a competitive and achievement oriented physical activity. The group of physical activities that were considered to be proper sport was very limited. The sphere of voluntary and unorganized physical activity was just developing.[328] At the same time, aesthetics was understood mainly as the philosophy of art, which led the scholars to look for contacts between art and sport as well as comparing them. The aesthetic element in sport was seen as a token of the artistic in sport, and concentrating on the aesthetics of sport as a departure from sport's ideals. While the writers' understanding about art was still somewhat traditional and narrow, the combination of these two restricted views led the discussion astray.

## *Linking Art and Sport*

The discussion about aesthetics and sport deviated both when similarities between sport and art were found, as well as when the connection was totally denied. Analogies were found between some sports and various artforms, and correspondingly fundamental differences were found between other sports and artforms. Measuring sport against drama and dance was the most common parallel drawn between art and sport: most sports have a temporal nature similar to the dramatic arts, and there are sports that are superficially related to dance. Still, the dissimilarities between any single form of art and sport also proved to be great: the artistic is not intrinsic to sport, and in art there is usually some kind of script that is lacking in sport. Sometimes connecting art and sport took a rather radical form: "Art is also performed in our natatoriums, gymnasiums, and playing fields through the medium of sport. The definition of art needs to be expanded to include the skilled athletic performance."[329]

The simplified paralleling of art and sport often lead to a comparison of the finished work of art and the athlete's performance, instead of the artist's work and the athlete's performance, where more relevant points of comparison could be found. Some early articles, however, promoted the latter point of view. For instance, Carolyn E. Thomas explores the possible similarities between art and sport through the aesthetic experience of the active performer in sport, as similar to an artist's experience: she looked for the element of play concealed by the competition and desire to win, as well as the qualities of perfect moments and peak experiences as special aesthetic experiences achievable through sport. Thomas's view on the connection between art and sport draws close to the contemporary views on the subject.[330]

Another exception to the usually narrow view of art is found in the article "The Work of Art in Sport" by Geoffrey Gaskin and D.W. Masterson. When exploring the work of art in sport, the writers take into account the recent changes in art, the detachment of art from the object, and the rise of conceptual art as taken place during the 1960s, especially in the visual arts.[331] This awareness of the departure from the modern concept of art seems to make their opinion on the possibility of sport being art more plausible. Gaskin and Masterson suggest that in the contemporary (1970s) situation sport can be seen as a medium in which, from time to time, works of art are produced.[332] Thirty years later, an analogous view was reformulated by Wolfgang Welsch, who found that: "Sport is *one* kind of art. Art (in the usual sense) is another one."[333] However, the comprehension of both art and sport had changed considerably from the time Gaskin and Masterson wrote their article, and thus Welsch has a more solid foundation for his insight.

The connection between art and sport was centrally topical in the early discussion about the aesthetics of sport, but when the understanding of the scope of aesthetics changed, the importance of this topic ebbed. The question about the parallels between art and sport still occasionally surfaces, but usually in quite a different tone. The similarity between art and sport is more a tool for the better understanding of some qualities of sport than a real fact.

The traditional connection of aesthetics and art, as applied to the aesthetics of sport in the 1970s and 1980s, deviates from today's views, but sport was also generally understood differently from today's notion. Much of the study of sport philosophy and aesthetics at the time maintained the understanding of

326 Best, 1974, 199, 210.

327 Kuntz 1974, 23. (originally: Weiss, Paul: "Records and the Man," Philosophic Exhance, Vol. 1, No. 3, Summer 1972, p.94.)

328 Latham 2013, 2.

329 Kuntz 1974, 13 (originally: Kovich, Maureen: "Sport as an Art Form," JOHPER, October 1971, Vol.42).

330 Thomas 1974, 69-70, 88.

331 Gaskin and Masterson 1974, 48-49.

332 Gasking and Masterson 1974, p 37.

333 Welsch 2005, p 150.

sport as an unquestionable and unchangeable practice, unlike the view used in the sociology of sport and this study, where modern sport is often understood as one organized practice in the history of physical cultures instead of being a consistent, pure, and isolated practice.[334] This rigid view of sport also affected the understanding of aesthetics in sport. It is my belief that this particularly restricted view of sport enabled comments like Kuntz's previously mentioned idea of play being the opposite of sport. Fortunately, other tones also existed. For instance, Joseph Kupfer finds the play element in sports to be an important aspect in their aesthetic potential.[335]

The desire to see sport as ideal and pure had obvious effects on the aesthetics of sport: the analysis of the aesthetic elements in sport concentrated almost exclusively on the races and competitions where the spirit of the original sport was the truest. The strongest aesthetic qualities (and the possible artistic elements in sport) were found in elite sports, especially in the Olympic Games, which represented sport in its most authentic form as an amateur achievement and record oriented sport.[336] The results of sport were valued more than the experiences. Almost all of the case studies in the early texts focused on elite sport, as if the lower level or leisurely sports with lesser quality did not exist, or at least the possibility of any aesthetic aspects occurring in them was not important enough to be mentioned. Neither was the aesthetics of training addressed. Sport aesthetics existed only in the festive occasions, when the audience was present – sport aesthetics existed for the audience, not for the athlete, an idea that conforms to the aesthetic ideal of modern art.

334 For example, sport-sociologist Henning Eichberg emphasizes the continuum of various physical cultures instead of the existence of one sport , see Eichberg 2009, 86.

335 Kupfer 1983, 118-119.

336 Kuntz 1974, 17. Gaskin Masterson 1974, p.60.

## *The Aesthetic Attitude*

The aesthetic attitude towards sport was seen as essential for inspecting the aesthetic element in sport already in the earliest texts: if sport is watched normally, i.e. focusing on the athletes' performances and the results of the events, then the aesthetics of sport goes unnoticed. The understanding of the aesthetic attitude has varied; Reid associates the aesthetic attitude with perceiving something in a contemplative way, which is, according to him, usually a deliberately adopted position, but can also be activated on special occasions without any effort.[337] Witnessing exceptional performances, achievements, and records are situations that might act like this. Best admits that almost everything can be considered from the aesthetic point of view, but some activities and objects are more open to an aesthetic consideration than others. For him, most sports have a primary purpose, for instance scoring a goal, which is too practical to allow aesthetic contemplation.[338] The contemplative approach that Reid and Best both advocate echoes the traditional approach of appreciating of art as adapted to sport. Kupfer sees sport as inherently aesthetic, even though the interest in the results forms an important part of a sport event. Despite the significance of the results, the foundation for enjoying sport is aesthetic. For Kupfer, sport is above all a non-practical element in our lives, and thus calls for our aesthetic attention. Sport is something that allows us to leave daily life behind for some time and enjoy (both by watching or as an active participant) bodily activity without an external practical end. The crucial element that makes sport aesthetically enjoyable is the ingredient of play. The playful attitude makes sport amenable to aesthetic contemplation. However, Kupfer thinks that the professionalization of and growing financial interests in sport represent a threat to the play-element. In fact, Kupfer observed already in 1983 that "professionalization: league expansion, salary and prize money escalation, media and consumer gluttony" have contaminated the prevailing attitude towards sport, thus reducing the playful elements in sport. According to Kupfer, this professionalization also affects the play-element in non-professional sport.[339]

337 Reid 1970, 248.

338 Best 1974, 198, 199.

339 Kupfer 1983, 111-112, 114.



## *A Taxonomy for the Aesthetics of Sport*

Key issues initiated in the 1970s studies of the aesthetics of sport were the categorization of varying aesthetic qualities in sport, and the debate about the significance of aesthetics in different types of sports. For instance, the quality of aesthetics in figure skating or diving has different qualities than the aesthetics of running, swimming, or the long jump, and again the aesthetics in games like soccer or baseball are different from solo sports. It was also thought that the significance of aesthetics varies between these sports. For instance, David Best saw the aesthetics in gymnastics and figure skating as an inherent part of those sports, as they were judged, not measured, but in sports like running the significance of aesthetics was low, almost nonexistent. The different types of sport are divided into different levels, which for one's part affected the quality of the aesthetics. For example, the aesthetics of top level Olympic track and field events must be at a higher level than a local amateur event, or the aesthetics of the same sports in the context of physical education.

The first theme of the differences in the aesthetics of different types of sports finds its general taxonomy quite early. Reid already mentions the spectrum of sports, with games at one end, and activities like figure skating, gymnastics, and diving at the other end, where aesthetics has a greater significance.[340] Some years later, Best defines the spectrum by a division into the *purposive* and the *aesthetic*

340 Reid 1970, 257.

sports. In the purposive sports, the aesthetic aspect is not built into the structure of the sport. These sports are measured by a stopwatch or yardstick, or they are games with narrow and well specified ends. The central examples of the purposive sports are the track and field events and games like football. In aesthetic sports, the aim cannot be specified in isolation of the aesthetic. These sports are judged by the quality of the performance. Again, figure skating, gymnastics, and diving formed the customary examples of the aesthetic sports.[341] When considering the spectrum of sports mentioned by Reid, Best is able to find only one sport that is situated in the middle of the field; ski-jumping is both measured and judged for the style of the performance. Best ends up thinking that there is no spectrum, but rather two polarities of sport, as there were hardly any mixed sports.[342]

The final refinement in the taxonomy of the types of sport in their relation to aesthetics was made in 1983 by Joseph Kupfer, in his book *Experience as Art, Aesthetics in Everyday Life*. Kupfer divides sport into three categories in their relation to the aesthetics. Firstly, there are *quantitative/linear* sports where a practical enterprise is transformed into a sport by excluding the practical value and concentrating on the action of moving against the natural limits of space and time. This category is similar to the Best's purposive sports, except the games are excluded from the category. Kupfer's equivalents to Best's aesthetic sports are the *qualitative/formal* sports. In addition to the previous dual categorization with two polarities, Kupfer adds a third category to his version of the taxonomy of sport. This group is *competitive sports,* where the significant difference from the two previous groups is an active human opponent. Both quantitative/linear and qualitative/formal sports show their best in competitions against other athletes, but in both cases the human opponent is not an intrinsic part of the sport. In Kupfer's opinion, the human opponent makes competitive sports the most interesting in the aesthetic sense, as the human factor extends the amount and degree of variety. Even though their categorization of sports varied, the two writers agreed that sports in these categories have a different relationship to aesthetics, and also produced different aesthetic qualities.

The aesthetics in quantitative/linear sports was seen as only partially connected to the sporting performance (Kupfer), or completely extrinsic to it (Best). The key to the aesthetic appreciation of these sports lies in the relation between the athlete's movement and her measurable result. The most beautiful performance wastes no energy, the simple repetitive movement is fluid and smooth – in Kupfer's words: "just as the compression of the words make a poem trim and lean"[343]. The weak point in the aesthetics of linear/quantitative sports comes from the fact that the aesthetic quality (especially for a spectator) has only a thin connection to the quality of the performance. One example of this is the 1950s Czech distance runner Emil Zátopek, who won several Olympic medals in spite of his very awkward running style. A cleaner style would probably have given him more speed, but if Zátopek would have lost the medals because of adopting an effortless running style, he would not have been remembered.[344] According to Kupfer, appreciating the aesthetics of purposive sports calls for special effort with respect to one's aesthetic attitude, as the recorded numerical results tend to distract the perceiver. Still, he sees that the delight of following the quantitative/linear sports is in relation to the human movement and the quantitative result. The numbers reveal the success of the athlete's struggle against nature. The records in quantitative/linear sports are more concrete than in any other sports; the only opponents are the laws of nature, and the records are comparable everywhere in the world. The aesthetics of these sports are profoundly connected with the efficiency of the performance – a beautiful run cannot be aesthetically pleasing for the spectator if the result is poor, and as the previous example of Zátopek illustrated, a performance without beauty can produce records. The aesthetic "enjoyment" of Zátopek's races emerges from the contrast between his winning and his awkward style. When real beauty is found in quantitative/linear sports, it is in the smooth, fluid motion that suggests effortlessness style and makes the preparatory work invisible, combined with an excellent result.[345]

The qualitative/formal sports are, as David Best defines them, intrinsically aesthetic. Unlike quantitative/linear sports, the moment of these sports lies in the admiration of the graceful strength of the human body. If the quantitative/linear sports are characterized by struggle against nature, the qualitative/formal sports are performed in nature.[346] Other aspects that set the qualitative/formal sports apart from the quantitative/linear ones are the implicit aesthetic norms that establish the framework of all qualitative/formal sports. A vault over a box means a very specific kind of movement, not just getting over the box somehow.[347] A specially trained skill is needed, but unlike in quantitative/linear sports the performance is not measured, it is evaluated by human judges. Best finds these sports to be closest to art, as their purpose cannot be separated from the manner of achieving it.[348] Even though several writers found the qualitative/formal sports to be aesthetic, they do not discuss the aesthetics extensively or analyze their qualities in detail. The reason for omitting further discussion is partially the relatively introductory approach of the articles, and partially the restricted aesthetics that the traditional qualitative/formal sports produce. When the set of permitted moves is limited, the sport cannot easily produce novel aesthetic experiences, just more refined presentations of the previous performances. Some novelty value has been created by introducing new variations of a sporting event; for instance, diving has introduced

341 Best 1974, 201-202.

342 Best 1974, 203. In the early 1970s the rules of ski-jump were well balanced between the length of the jump and its style, but today the rules have been changed and the significance of style is in the minor position.

343 Kupfer 1983, 116.

344 Best 1974, 204.

345 Kupfer 1983, 115-116.

346 Kupfer 1983, 116.

347 Best 1974, 202.

348 Best 1974, 202.

synchronized diving, where two divers attempt to perform the sequence in tandem. The synchronization adds one more element to the evaluation of the performance, but does not change the aesthetics.

The situation has changed somewhat with the advent of the new qualitative/formal sports. Sports like snowboarding have, for the present, an open set of movements, and the athletes' experimentation constantly produces new tricks. However, the variety of the existing tricks forms already an established practice, which could hinder the future development of snowboarding style. The situation is similar to other new physical practices (skateboarding, parkour, etc.) that have risen to the mainstream during the last decades. They have the potential to change the image of qualitative/formal sports, but they can also get stuck and continue to repeat standardized moves, as in gymnastics or diving.

The third group of competitive sports exists only in Kupfer's classification. However, he finds them the most interesting from the aesthetic point of view, because they are the most unpredictable of the sports. In an ideal situation, there are several changes of balance and pressure during the game, which maintain the tension until the last few minutes of the game or event. In addition to the presence of the human opponent, games involve another feature that most other sports lack; the games are played as a part of a series that lasts throughout a summer or winter season, wherein the single games form a narrative that concludes with one of the teams winning the championship. The narrative can be even longer – the history of a team over several seasons. Nick Hornby's autobiographical book *Fever Pitch* opens up a narrative that parallels the growth of the author from a boy to a man alongside his being a loyal supporter of the Arsenal Football Club. In the book, Arsenal's years with little success are juxtaposed with the prolonged teenage years, full of uncertainty, that finally end when the team takes the Championship.[349]

## *The Contemporary Aesthetics of Sport*

The state of the contemporary aesthetics of sport reveals the changes that have taken place both in the understanding of the role of aesthetics and the role of sport, as well as the changes in the comprehension of art. The expanded role of aesthetics, and increased understanding of the deeper significance of aesthetics, both help us to see sport as an inherently aesthetic practice. When there is no reason to demonstrate the existence of aesthetics in sport, the qualities and features of aesthetics in sport can be discussed more freely.

Contemporary sport is no longer only a competitive practice. In addition to the record-oriented achievement sports, there are now variations of traditional sports that concentrate on the physical and social enjoyment of the sport. Furthermore, today there are various physical practices that seemingly remind sport, but like to

349 Hornby 2000 (1992).



categorize themselves as something else.[350] Most of these practices also have a competitive side, but their devotees emphasize the value of the experiences and the social relationships between the participants.[351] Consequently, the area of the aesthetics of sport has expanded and developed in new directions.

The debate about the general characteristics and qualities of the aesthetics of sport continues, but today the question of sport's relation to art plays a minor role – although the question is occasionally treated. The emphasis of the art-sport discussion has also changed; art and sport are not compared because art defines the scope of aesthetics, but because the comparison can illuminate new aspects of sport.[352] The change in art practice, its evolution from a museum and gallery based, materially restricted practice towards everyday materials and locations, has also made drawing parallels between art and sport more plausible, if not yet unproblematic.

Now, when it is self-evident that there are good and justified reasons to watch sports from an aesthetic point of view, it has become possible to deal with the specific aesthetic aspects in individual sports. For example, in Finland, Max Ryynänen and Ossi Naukkarinen have both written about the aesthetics of ice-hockey. Naukkarinen's treatment approaches the Finnish folk-aesthetics of ice hockey in a down-to-earth fashion. He describes the various characteristics of the players and their equipment and the multi-sensory atmosphere of an ice-hockey game, and analyzes the quality of different games as well as the differences between the experiences of the spectators and the players; how different it is to watch the players tackle each other than it is to imagine oneself being the one tackled against the wall of an ice rink by a defender weighting 100 kilos or more, or how it feels to keep the goal when the puck flies towards you at the speed of a car on a highway. Naukkarinen connects these analyses about the game to everyday life. How the game and the players' performances are seen affects his own ad hoc –playing at the local ice rink; even though one's skills are not good enough, one can imagine doing and even try to accomplish the same moves as the professionals. Similarly, playing laid-back games affects watching a proper game – they give much more understanding about the professional player's experiences.[353]

Ryynänen's perspective on ice-hockey is quite different. Following NHL ice hockey as a media sport, Ryynänen treats the game from a distanced point of view. The players' careers as narratives, the aesthetics of statistics, fights in the rink, or even the play-off beards, are all worth analyzing. Unlike Naukkarinen, Ryynänen does not connect the game with everyday physical experiences. He

350 However, the naming of these practices reflects the comparison and the dominance of traditional sports; the recent sport-like physical practices are described, for instance, as *post-sports*, *unofficial sports*, *extreme sports*, *alternative sports*, *lifestyle sports*, *new sports,* or *new games*, while the opposite is called modern sport or mainstream sports.

351 Wheaton 2004, 2-4. Hänninen 2006, 7.Hoffmann 2007

352 Welsch 2005, Kreft 2012.

353 Naukkarinen 2008, 194-199.

is more interested in the world of professional sport and the contemporary methods of following the game; watching the games on television does not provide enough entertainment and information, and internet services like YouTube and Google are playing a large role today.[354]

When the celebratory aspects of sport connected to sporting competitions are left in the background, aesthetic features of a new kind come into sight. In addition to dealing with the aesthetics of sport from an external point of view, the aesthetic experience of the athlete has also become a frequent point of view. Alongside the research concentrating on the purely aesthetic aspects of sport, a body of texts in the field of social sciences touches on the aesthetic aspects of sports, especially if aesthetics is sympathetically understood as "sensuous knowing"[355].

For instance, Hockey's and Allen-Collinson's experience-based research on distance running, as well as Borden's approach to the urban environment through skateboarding, and Atkinson's study of parkour, all deal with aesthetic experiences in connection with physical activity.[356] The objective of these studies is not to analyze the aesthetic elements in physical practices, but to bring the felt idea of sport closer to the reader, in order to open up the specific perspective in their studies: highlighting the (aesthetic) experience moves the point of view away from the cold observation of the practice, and enables at least a partial understanding of the participant's experience. A detailed explanation about the mundane experience of running around a park and through local streets from the athlete's point view provides at least some clarification of the experience for a non-runner reader. The more extreme practices of skateboarding and parkour are more difficult to understand without personal first-hand experience, but the written accounts can open up the aesthetic preferences and experiences of the active participants.

354 Ryynänen 2006 (Art of Ice Hockey, November 06, 2006: Internet, Google and Computer Games)

355 Naukarinen 2012.

356 Hockey 2004, 2005. Hockey and Allen-Collinson 2006 and 2007. Allen-Collinson and Hockey 2007 and 2011. Borden 2001. Atkinson 2009.

## *The Experiences of Spectators and Athletes*

A notable amount of the discussion about the aesthetics of sport deals with it from the spectator's point of view, and only a minority concentrates on the athlete's experience. Whereas the outsider perspective allows one to view the sport performance or event from at least two different angles - as a detached event comparable to an art performance, or as a lived experience - the athlete's perspective on her own performance allows only the latter. Appreciating sport as an external event leads to comparisons between sport and art events, while concentrating on the internal experience brings sport closer to everyday life, as well as popular culture, and their aesthetic perspectives. Choosing the point of view affects the comprehension of the aesthetic dimension of sport.





The audience sees sport as a staged performance, but for the athlete the experience is a mixture of multisensory observations of the environment and bodily experiences. The audience's sport experience is usually related to an organized event, and in most cases to major national or international events.[357] The big divide in an audience's experience is formed between sports followed in a live situation or through some media – first radio[358], then television, and recently through the internet, with a variety of devices. The live stadium events have approached the qualities of the media experience, as new technology has been brought into the stadiums. Until the late twentieth century there were only commentators and scoreboards in the sport arenas, but over recent decades the video-screens with instant slow motion replays and multiple possible points of view have brought the live sports event much closer to the audiovisual TV-experience. If one misses an important incident on the field, it will be shown several times from different angles on the video screens installed in the stadium, and today smartphones provide access to replays on the internet.[359] The contemporary sport experience has changed significantly since the early 1980s, when Joseph Kupfer wrote about a baseball game as a place outside the everyday, where the audience leaves their daily worries behind for a few hours.[360] Today you do not share the experience only with those next to you; it is possible to extend the communication outside the venue. It works in reverse as well – all the media present at the arena connects the spectators with the world outside. The new technology has removed much of the empty moments when the spectators had to stare at an empty stadium.[361]

The aesthetics of the media experience of sports have evolved along with the devices used. Even though following sports through media enables the ultimate privacy, the experience is regularly shared, at least with the family, but often with a larger party – at home or a sports bar. Somehow the sharing of the experience intensifies it, which seems at least partially different from the aesthetic experiences connected to art. Art can be contemplated and analyzed in company, but the instant sharing of the experience is not needed, or even aspired to.

The sports that attract the most spectators are usually the ones with the greatest magnitude in the aesthetic sense. The aesthetic quality is not guaranteed, but there will be a spectacle. Even in the era of modern sport, when the entertainment value was not stressed as it is today, seeing top-athletes interested large audiences and created the greatest sport experience. However, it is hard to compare modern sport and the sports of today's consumer culture. Today, the spectacle of sport is several times larger than during the twentieth century. The logic that the producers of the sport spectacles follow is: the contemporary sport audience is dulled by all their previous experiences, so producing experiences to remember requires

357 For instance: Gumbrecht 2006, 312.

358 Mandell 1984, 220.

359 Turtiainen 2012, footnote n:o 51 p.17.

360 Kupfer 1983, 113.

361 Gumbrecht 1999, 368.

that they must always be greater than the previous ones.[362]

## *The Athlete's Experience*

The athlete's experience was already touched upon in some of the earliest articles about the aesthetics of sport, but the analysis suffered a similar ambiguity as the debate in general, chiefly because of the tendency to link art and aesthetics together. Reid, for instance, treats the athletes' experience through the idea of aesthetic contemplation, and finds it possible for an athlete to have some aesthetic enjoyment when his performance is successful, but at the same time thinks that the aesthetic aspects cannot be enjoyed properly, because the athlete is engaged in the game. According to Reid, the aesthetic experience in sport requires contemplation, like enjoying a work of art, but that contemplation is prevented by the practical ends of the sport. Reid somehow wants to parallel the experiencing of the totally different aesthetic qualities of art and the bodily aesthetic experience in sport. Thomas' approach in 1974 drew closer to the contemporary view in its attempt to identify the play element, or special moments and peak experiences in sport, through the subjective aesthetic experience of an athlete.[363]

Joseph Kupfer approaches the athlete's side of sport aesthetics from a pragmatic perspective, and has no problem in finding the aesthetic aspects in an athlete's experience. There is no need to stop for contemplating the experience – the experience is lived through, it is felt immediately and simultaneously with the performance. One can contemplate and analyze the experience, like Kupfer himself does while writing about the sporting experience, however it takes place in retrospect. In the heat of a game or a race (and to a lesser extent while exercising), the vision, hearing, and the other senses of the athlete are focused on her own performance, or on the team's collective attempts to overcome the opponent. If there is an audience it is noticed, but it is not the primary interest. Unlike the spectator (who naturally experiences it too), the somatic experience dominates the whole. It can be the lactic acid burning in the feet, the pain in one's body when the opponent has punched you, or a more subtle aspect: the feeling of the body's posture when serving the ball in a tennis game, or keeping the rhythm in a slalom race. Most of the time, the control of the body is automatic; however, long-term training is needed to embed the right feeling into muscle memory. When a spectator also has some personal experience of the same sport, her appreciation of an athlete's performance finds new layers: if one has run a marathon, one knows how hard it is to complete it in just over two hours, even if one cannot do it oneself. Similarly, a recreational tennis or football player knows from her own bodily experience how certain elite performances rise over the others. Even though one is not at the moment experiencing the same bodily feelings, her memory of similar movements, stretching, or exhaustion brings her closer to the experience of the elite athlete.[364]

Jaana Parviainen has studied the structures involved in perceiving the bodily experiences of others. She employs the concept of *kinaesthetic empathy*, based on Edith Stein's ideas about empathy. The concept relies on two features in our perception of the living body: firstly, the body meets its environment simultaneously by touching it and by being touched by it. Secondly, the average shape of the human body, as well as a collection of common experiences, forms a link between people. These features make it possible to understand the bodily experiences of other human beings: for instance, watching somebody accidentally cutting her hand makes one feeling an echo of the pain, which is an effect of kinaesthetic empathy.[365]

Parviainen's interest has been particularly in the process of teaching and learning modern dance. Dancers must learn to adapt their expression to various postures and bodily expressions. The visual information about correct movements is not enough; one has to learn to bodily feel the movement in order to employ it further. Moreover, the teacher has to give the feedback to her students through felt movement, using her kinaesthetic sensing.[366] In a similar manner, one can trace or co-live the bodily experiences of an athlete, especially if the action is somewhat familiar. Or, one can employ the memories of bodily experiences in everyday actions.

Kupfer attempts to bring the athlete's experience closer to the experiences of an average person by finding equivalencies between everyday actions and sport, and thus tries to demonstrate the advantages of studying the aesthetics of sport. Kupfer finds sports like the 100 meter sprint analogous to running for a bus, and the skater's pirouette to a nimble slip into an overcoat.[367] An ordinary person cannot have experiences similar to an elite athlete's, but she can enjoy similar kinaesthetic experiences by combining her everyday actions and memories of excellence in sport. Kupfer's approach brings the experiences possible only to top athletes much closer to common situations, and thus gives special value for the aesthetic of sport in appreciating the bodily experiences in everyday life. Already in the early 1980s, Kupfer found problematic the fact that American's spend their days sitting, much of it inside cars and pressing buttons, in a state where comprehensive bodily experiences are minimal. His view is that appreciating the aesthetics of sport helps one to appreciate everyday bodily experiences. Participating in sports, in addition to the mundane experiences of rushing to catch the bus or playing with an overcoat, multiplies the understanding of bodily experiences; individual sports turn the body into an object of sensory awareness, and social sports create continuity between the perception of the environment (the team mates or the opponent) and bodily reactions. According to Kupfer, it is sometimes possible even in competitive sports

362 Andrews 2006, 95-96.
Kellner 2003, 66.

363 Reid 1970, 248. Thomas 1974.

364 Kupfer 1983, 137-138.

365 Parviainen 2003, 152-153, 155.

366 Parviainen 2003, 159.

367 Kupfer 1983, 116, 117.

to forget the score and enjoy the internal rhythms of the game – the play-element in sport.[368]

The bodily experience of physical exertion is always mixed with environmental experience: even breathing induces a contact with surrounding air, and standing presses the ground against ones soles.[369] According to Kupfer, the contact *with* the environment varies according to the activity. In the context of modern sport, the typical approach is working *against* nature. The athlete has to make maximal use of her body in order to perform optimally. On a more comfortable level, the environmental experience can transform into acting *in* or *within* nature; not concentrating only on the performance, but observing the surroundings and acting in the environment, using all the senses. The activity can take place in close contact, even when immersed in the environment. The aesthetic experience of acting in contact with the environment suffers if there is either an excess or lack of activity; the consequences of struggling too hard are obvious, but avoiding exhaustion and simply taking the observer's position also weakens the experience.[370]

Wolfgang Welsch covers some aspects of the transformation of the athlete's experiences in his article "Sport Viewed Aesthetically and Even as Art?", where he considers the athlete's disposition towards her body. His view is that earlier attitudes that emphasized the power of will over the body have been (at least partially) replaced by a more gentle attitude based on the feeling of the body as a basis for top-athletes' training, and the subjugation of the body has been replaced by the celebration of the body as the perfection of human potential.[371]

# Recent Comparisons of Art and Sport

The question of the relationship between art and sport has its place in the current aesthetics of sport; however, the changes in both art and sport, as well as aesthetics, have transformed that relationship: art has expanded its scope so that sport can be used for making art, and on some occasions it is plausible to temporarily regard sport as art in order to capture certain, chiefly artistic, features of sport for closer inspection. Lastly, the changes in aesthetics make drawing parallels between art and sport feasible: while in earlier times art defined the aesthetic, today art is only an instance of the aesthetic, or at its best an intensification of the aesthetic.[372]

While making an inquiry about the aesthetic aspects in elite sport, Wolfgang Welsch examined the connections between sports and art, and the possibility of viewing sport as art. The basis of Welsch's argumentation is that today's art practice has moved closer to everyday life, and cannot be seen as similar to the detached and lofty practice it was during the period of high modernism in the twentieth century. His view is that today's art deliberately seeks possibilities to merge with everyday objects, actions, and experiences. Welsch outlines the key tendencies within art practice that have caused this shift away from the previous conception of art, and made it possible to see sport as artistic. The first one is the use of everyday objects as parts of artworks. This had been visible in the traditions of ready-made and collage that evolved from the 1920s, and were so advanced by the 1960s that it was difficult to tell the artworks apart from the other objects by visual inspection alone.[373] The second tendency is the attempt to dissolve art practice into everyday life. It is best seen in practices where the work of art, the object, or the process is brought outside the art institutions in such a way that no frame isolates the artwork from everyday life. In addition to these two major tendencies, the general re-evaluation of art practice in its relation to the rest of culture, for instance the popular arts, has caused insecurity about the borders of art practice, as well as the fraying of the conception of art, and thus opened up new possibilities for connecting art and sport.[374]

Welsch sees that sport has developed "striking new affinities with aesthetics"[375] that are visible in many aspects of contemporary sport. A major transformation in sport has taken place in the relationship to the athlete's body; the previous subjugation of the body has changed into the celebration of the body. Instead of treating the body as a machine, and commanding it by willpower, the athlete tries to listen to her body and adapt her training according to that felt experience. There is also an erotic element present in contemporary sport, as well as an emancipatory emphasis instead of the controlling aspect of modern sport. Welsch treats the change in the context of elite sport, but I see it as also taking place in recreational sport; the quest for experiences has taken over from the struggle for achievement throughout the practice of sport.[376]

For Welsch, sport is a drama without a script, where the dramatic emerges from the event itself. Similarly to art, sport events are detached from the everyday world and staged in order to produce dramatic moments. In addition to being a celebration of physical excellence, sport is a celebration of the contingency: a 10 000-meter race can become more exciting because of the tactical choices of the runners. The rules and the objective of the race make the space for the dramatic very narrow, but the right combination of actions during the race can turn an uneventful run into an interesting one.[377]

368 Kupfer 1983, 137-140.

369 Shusterman 2008, 8.

370 Kupfer 2003, 77-79, 81.

371 Welsch 2005, 137-139.

372 Welsch 2005, 140.

373 For instance: Arthur C. Danto about the Brillo Boxes by Andy Warhol in Danto 1964, 580.

374 Welsch 2005, 140-141. Sepänmaa 2012, section 2.

375 Welsch 2005, 136.

376 Welsch 2005, 139, 143.

377 Welsch 2005, 142, 145-147.

The temporal structure of sport also lead Lev Kreft to suggest that the comparison between drama and sport would be the most plausible when art and sport are paralleled. While Welsch's article is limited to elite sports and contemporary art practice in general, Kreft's viewpoint features a wider notion of sport and a more confined view of art. In addition, he connects the aesthetics of sport to everyday aesthetics, not art. Kreft begins by considering the qualities of sport from a definition originally developed by Bernard Suits: "playing a game is the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles". Even though the definition concentrates on games, it is applicable to all contemporary sports; the voluntary overcoming of unnecessary obstacles can be found in any sport, with or without competition. This approach makes it possible to expand the comparison of art and sport outside elite sports, to hobbyist sports, exercises, and even some non-sport physical cultures. The play-attitude is significant in this, and prevents a too serious attitude towards the activity. The quality of the attempt, as defined by the rules of the particular sport, forms the basis of the dramatic in sport.[378]

When measuring traditional theater and sport against each other, there are various differences; the structure of theater and sport events, as well as the role of the characters on the stage, differs. In order to avoid these problems in comparing theater and sport, Kreft's solution is to compare sport to the postmodern concept of drama, the postdramatic theater, instead of the traditional conception of theater. The concept of postdramatic theater does not necessitate the formal and fixed features of institutional art theater in order for a practice to be considered theater. Kreft starts from Paul Woodruff's open-ended definition of theater: theater is "the art by which human beings make human action worth watching, in a measured time and space"[379], which already gives theater the potential to exist outside the modern system of art.[380]

Kreft reinforces the connection between sport and postdramatic theater by employing Richard Schechner's theories about contemporary performance. Schechner just touches on sport while outlining the relationships between various types of performance. However, the outcome of Schechner's comparison is that sport can be included among contemporary forms of theater: most of the features of sport are shared with theater. There are only two major differences between the features of sport and theater: sport does not create a symbolic reality, which is fundamental to theater, and theater is scripted, while sport is not. Sport consists of complex actions, and its dramatic element lies in the manner of performing these actions. No specially constructed staging is needed to make a sport game dramatic: playing a sport game creates the stage naturally by defining the space, the time limit, and the rules for the game.[381]

Furthermore, Kreft's view is that the dramatic in sport combines the aspects of everyday aesthetics and the special theatrical action of playing a sport game. This can be seen as corresponding to an artistic work process or unfinished performance: sport acts simultaneously on two levels, it belongs partially to everyday life but as a staged, performative practice it can be juxtaposed with other kinds of performances. This view of the aesthetics of sport advocates the association of sport with contemporary artistic performance, and in my opinion also with artistic work, instead of the previously proposed comparison of (elite) sport and finished work of art.[382]

An important component for the aesthetic of sport is the play-element. Kupfer already thought that the play-element is crucial for the aesthetic enjoyment of sport[383], but for Kreft the fine balance between play and seriousness imparts the aesthetic, the drama to sport; for a spectator sport is not serious, but play, while the participants of sport experience it as serious, however playful. The seriousness of the game for the players emerges from the risks they take: playing the game always incorporates the chance of losing. The role of players in the sport game differs from those in art-theater. Similarly to the sport-game, which at the same time exists in everyday life and is also staged outside it, the player's role functions on two levels: the players play as themselves, they do not adopt a predetermined fictional identity, but at the same time they establish a game identity that is generated by their place in the game and their recurrent actions within the game.[384]

Even though sport incorporates many features required for something to be art in the current postmodern situation, neither Welsch nor Kreft can see sport replacing art as such. Welsch sees that sport fulfills similar functions as art for many people who are not particularly interested in art. The plurality of contemporary culture enables the observing and enjoying of sport as "one kind of art", whereas art in the usual sense still belongs to a special category. Kreft, in turn, sees the comparison to a wider conception of sport and contemporary art practices as a more fruitful approach for promoting the aesthetic and artistic aspect of sport as a special part of everyday life.[385]

In addition to these approaches investigating the reasons, conditions, and restrictions in linking art and sport, yet another type of relationship between sport and art has been proposed that could provide a real use for art within sport practice. Tim L. Elcombe's proposal suggests that the ontological question of the relationship between the two practices should be left aside, and one should instead think about art as an ideal metaphor for sport. Elcombe advocates that

378 Kreft 2012, 225.

379 Woodruff 2008, 39.

380 Kreft 2012, 226.

381 Kreft 2012, 227-228, 230-231. Schechner 1998, p xii, 12. The features shared between theater performances and sport are: special ordering of time, special value for objects, non-productive, rules, special place, appeal to other, audience, self-assertive, self-transcendent, completed.

382 Kreft 2012, 228.

383 Kupfer 1983, 111, 139-140.

384 Kreft 2012, 229-230. Also Kupfer 1983, 111, 139-140.

385 Welsch 2005, 148-150. Kreft 2012, 232.

sport and art should not be compared in order to find similarities; there is no need for sport to become art. Instead, art and artistic practice should be seen as a model for sport, thus bringing it closer to art. However, there are some preconditions to this notion of art; art and art practice should be understood through the Deweyan conception of art. That suggests treating art as a source of an intensive aesthetic experience, not as special objects or as a specialized social practice within the limits of the artworld. Art should be seen as a relationship between humans and objects or performances (of any kind) that can produce a forceful aesthetic experience.[386]

The reason for suggesting the idea of art as a metaphor for sport is Elcombe's wish to displace the previous metaphor of *sport as war* with *sport as art*. The metaphor of sport as war is not commonly used today, but its usage during the earlier twentieth century affects the comprehension of sport's objectives even today. Although the war metaphor carries some positive connotations without the horrors of real war, such as courage, discipline, perseverance, etc., in today's world the negative association is greater, because using war as a model for sport suggests hatred for your opponents, a singular focus on efficiency, and using any means necessary in the competition, for instance. Replacing the metaphor of war with the pragmatist idea of art would, according to Elcombe, help to leave behind many of the problems plaguing contemporary sports, and to promote the meaningful contents of sport, such as directed, purposeful activity, participation in social activity, and the emotional response to the physical activity, and generally construct meaning around sport practice. According to Elcombe, the use of art as the metaphor for sport would promote making sport practice an essential part of a good life.[387]

The hopes that Elcombe places on art as a leading metaphor for sport are already gaining ground in sport, but mainly outside the realm of achievement sport. I have found at least two categories within current physical practices where the metaphor of sport as art is evident. Firstly, in the contemporary leisure, hobbyist sport. Many people doing sport for exercise and as a hobby do it for the experience, not for results alone. The reason for undertaking sports like distance running, which are seemingly efficiency and health oriented, is at least partially based on the experiences gained through practice. One has to endure the tedious exercises to be able to run a marathon, but running a marathon gives you an experience that is usually more important than the actual time you achieve.[388] Correspondingly, playing sport games (for instance football and ice hockey) for recreation is mostly done for the experience; other benefits follow on the side.[389] Even when one does set goals, as in competitions for hobbyist sport practices, the main driving force is the aesthetic experience, not the measurable achievement. The experience pursued can be a somaesthetic one, the good, warm feeling after a run or the feeling of making a successful pass to a friend in a local ice-rink, or environmentally inclined, such as running through a forest or feeling the sun warming you in the middle of a game. There is also the possibility of encountering experiences of beauty that relate to art. A runner who suddenly finds the right rhythm and posture for efficient running can experience beauty in her exercise, and when two equal teams play ice hockey, the game can achieve the artistic features of a drama.

Secondly, art as a leading metaphor for sport is present in post-sports activities, where the physical act of playing with the equipment and the chosen environment were established before the idea of competition set in. Post-sports like snowboarding, skateboarding, surfing, parkour, various frisbee games, climbing, and trampoline acrobatics and so on have been transformed from playing with physical skills, novel equipment (not always needed), and features of the environment as they entered into the process of sportifcation, organizing the activity in a competitive model.[390] Even today, when many of these post-sport practices have been adopted into the category of sport, the attitude of the participants towards the official competitions differs from that found in the modern sports. Meeting colleagues and friends is as important as the competition. It is more about doing things together than competing against each other. Many post-sports have formed a subculture around the physical practice, and these subcultures are in many ways aesthetic practices with their own, specific aesthetic rules. For example, the visual aesthetics of hip hop form a significant part of the skateboarding practice, and the combination promotes a quite different concept of the aesthetically positive (or even of beauty) than the visual practices connected to mainstream art practice or modern sports.[391]

# A Closer Look: The Aesthetics of Distance Running

The previous overview of the aesthetics of sport provides some general understanding of the special aspects and topics within the theme, but without concrete examples the issue escapes real understanding. For this reason, I would like to explore the development and aspects of the aesthetics of distance running. Distance running lacks all the artful flamboyance of sports like gymnastics or pole vaulting, and the obvious social dimension of the games. However, there are many qualities in the experience of distance running that are missing from other sports where the performance is over in a brief moment. The simplicity of the running action

386 Elcombe 2012, 209, 211.

387 Elcombe 2012, 210-212.

388 Tainio 2012 a.

389 For instance: Naukkarinen 2006, 29. Naukkarinen 2008, 197.

390 Atkinson 2009, 173.

391 Wheaton 2004, 11-12.

makes it easier to point out the individual features of the practice. The different practices within contemporary distance running have some clearly definable aesthetic aspects that can be targeted for deeper analysis; for instance, ultra-marathons exceed most sports in duration and magnitude. Additionally, many definable aspects of distance running overlap and form a layered entity that affords a good specimen of the complexity of aesthetics, even in a simple sport.

During the period of the dominance of modern sport, the aesthetic aspects of distance running were confined by the expectations of the sport's principles: running was practiced in competitions or as training for them. The orientation to quantitative results diluted the attention given to other features of running. The environmental aspects of the aesthetics were limited, as most running took place on standardized running tracks. The runner's experience was also an object of limited interest; how one's running felt had little importance when the objective was simply being faster than the other competitors. Even though running was one of central events in the context of modern sport, it was not a popular form of exercise until jogging started to become fashionable at the end of the 1960s. If one takes a look at photographs and films from the famous twentieth century running competitions, one sees stern looking men[392] running around a track made of crushed brick or coal. Their equipment is minimal – even for a runner – plain shorts and tops, and their running shoes were not padded sneakers but thin soled, light shoes. The aesthetics was based on the discipline of mind of over the body: the attitude towards the athlete's body was tough; the body was treated as a machine. For example, Paavo Nurmi followed his running with a stopwatch in order to pace his exercises. On the other hand, Nurmi was not totally uninterested in the aesthetics of his running; he has written about the search for the most natural style – although only in order to be more efficient.[393] Later, with the scientific training methods, the machine metaphor became even more accurate. The athletes' movements are recorded and analyzed carefully in order to squeeze out the final bit of his capacity.

The growing popularity of distance running at the end of the twentieth century, as well as the first decade of the twenty-first century, has changed the aesthetics of running significantly; the whole scope of experiences associated with contemporary recreational running stands apart from modern achievement running. In recreational running, experiences seem to form the chief stimulus for exercising—the level of success measured in time or distances takes a second place. The experiences are mainly aesthetic in nature, and the interest lies in the bodily, somaesthetic and environmental experiences, however running in a group of enthusiasts also provides social experiences. The bodily experience has a connection with efficiency, but the aesthetic experience is always present. Efficient running is felt as aesthetically positive, but it does not necessarily need to look beautiful. The bodily experience comes first. Work still forms the basis for the positive bodily experience, like with success in competitive running; one has to run the tedious and boring runs to be able to enjoy the bodily feelings of running during the best running season.[394] Participation in competitions does not change this inclination towards experience. Running an organized marathon is not just an achievement; participating also motivates experimentation with unusually strenuous experiences that are not comfortably possible in solitary running or a free-form running event.[395]

The environmental aspect of running comes out in the search for aesthetically desirable routes, or in traveling for new landscapes to run through.[396] For a competitive runner, the fluency and safety of the route seem to be the primary concern, but for the experience-seeking hobbyist runner the exercise can be a way to explore the public artworks in a city, as Pauli Jokinen has done in Helsinki.[397] Although running is always about challenging oneself against natural forces, a hobbyist runner does not have to fight against nature in order to exercise successfully; one can listen to one's body and the environment, and adjust the running to be more in line both with one's experience and the environment.[398]

The somaesthetic aspects or enjoyment of running arises from the continuous steady rhythms of running, steps, and breathing, and the slowly growing weariness during a long run. Different runs give variation to the experience; sometimes it feels good to test one's limits and run against nature, and sometimes the preference can be for running comfortably, within nature. A long steady run at a slow pace gives a quite different experience from a short test run at a "competition" pace. During the first case, the somaesthetic experience blends with the environmental experience, and one can run at the same time with nature and in nature. A high speed test run, a Cooper test for example, is almost solely a somaesthetic experience. When breathing is almost too short and lactic acid is burning one's veins, it is impossible to concentrate on anything but the track and the action of running. The somatic experiences blend with the environmental ones: it is different to breath in cold winter weather than in the heat of the summer, and running through the darkness in an October rain produces an experience of one kind, while staying home and doing the same exercise on a treadmill creates another.[399]

Even though the practice of distance

392 Distance running was a solely male practice for a long time; for instance, the first women's marathon in the Olympic Games took place as late as 1984 in the Los Angeles Summer Games. International Olympic Committee 2011, 2.

393 Nurmi 2010 (1923) ,45-49. Bale 2004, 88-89.

394 Roos 1995, chapter 3. Also Murakami 2008, 45-46.

395 Tainio 2012 a.

396 Murakami 2008, 90-91. Roos 1995, chapter 10.

397 Hockey and Allen Collison 2006, 77. Mannila 2010.

398 Koski 2005, 152-154. Kupfer 2003, 77-89. Kupfer deals with the experiential relationship with nature, but my opinion is that a similar point of view can be taken in the case of an athlete's relationship with her total experience, including both bodily and environmental experience.

399 Kupfer 2003, 77-78. Hockey and Allen-Collinson 2007, 119-123.

running requires minimal equipment, and the basic technique of running is natural to most people, there are complicated layers in the aesthetic experience of running; running is a physical practice that produces cultural habits. For instance, since the first wave of jogging's popularity there has been an ongoing development of running shoes, the most significant point of contact between a runner and her environment. The contact between the foot and the shoe and the ground provides a notable somatic experience in running – especially if there is something wrong.

Modern footwear emerged from 1960s onwards, along with the jogging craze, and simultaneously transformed the earlier aesthetic experience of the competitive runners into the novel experience of leisure running. At first, some suspension and damping were added to the heels of shoes in order to make running more comfortable. Later, these airbag and gel suspensions became more efficient, and damping was added under the ball of the foot. The footwear became more and more segmented, because all types of runners needed the exactly right type of shoes. When I began running in the early 2000s, this was the norm. Before starting more serious running, I had to find out how I trod and then choose the right footwear. The hobbyist running practice had made running dependent on a technology, where the structural flaws in one's feet were squared to make distance running possible. The development of shoe technology advanced the inclusiveness of running, it made distance running possible for almost everybody. However, the technology limited the aesthetic experience in running by excluding the learning of running technique. You only needed the shoes and perseverance for training properly to become a distance runner. Prior to the jogging revolution, becoming a runner was also a question of learning the technique.[400] During the early 2000s, after a few decades of technological development of the running shoes a counter movement began to form, as barefoot running attempted to return running to a natural style.

I got interested in the barefoot or minimalistic running movement in 2011, and out of curiosity acquired a pair of running shoes completely without modern cushioning, with only flat and very thin soles. Even though I had looked for information about the technique of barefoot running, and read other runner's experiences with minimal shoes, the first run was a surprise: my competence as a runner was completely lost with the minimal shoes. Running on an even surface or uphill went quite well, and I was able to land on the midsole or on the ball of my feet as required without the cushioned heel, but running downhill proved extremely difficult; I was hitting my heels hard on the gravel road like I was used to with my regular shoes. Running in a "natural" way obviously took some training, because it felt totally unnatural after the first try.

Even when the other features of my running habit stayed the same, changing to minimal shoes transformed the aesthetic experience significantly. Standard shoes soften the contact with the ground so that the changes of the surface or terrain does not affect running, but with minimal shoes the asphalt feels much harder than gravel, and even the slightest downhill requires concentration in order to keep the feet landing right. Removing the cushioning turned running into a practice that requires careful listening to the body and essentially learning a new skill.

The differences in the aesthetic experience between regular contemporary running and the minimalist style are first and foremost somaesthetic. One has to be much more aware of posture and strides in order to run comfortably with minimal shoes. Moreover, while learning the technique, the concentration needed for the style affects all the other aspects of the aesthetic experience. Adapting to the new technique forces one to block out some parts of the experience, both the environmental and the social, in order to concentrate on the footsteps. The surrounding environment is not noticed so keenly, because the physical contact with the ground is amplified.

Minimalist running is not necessarily any more natural than regular contemporary fitness running or its predecessor, running in achievement sport, but it provides an example of the contemporary variations in running and exemplifies a potential within a seemingly simple sport for developing complicated practices and producing various experiences. It also models the connection between ideals and physical practices. Running as a sport transforms as a consequence of the changing ideals; the running practiced within the gymnastic movement in the nineteenth century sounds odd today, and the conception of running within achievement sport provided quite limited experiences, while the contemporary running culture seems to be more open to various approaches and aesthetic experiences.

400 Sailors 2009, 280-209.



# 7 • Artification





The novel concept of artification refers to situations and processes where something traditionally not regarded as art is seen containing some features of art or the artistic.[401] Artification can take place either through a shift in cultural practice or it may be purposefully produced in order to highlight certain features in an originally non-artistic practice. Sometimes artification suggests lasting changes; the status of the situation or the process has moved permanently closer towards the ideals of the artistic – and in rare cases it is transformed into art. However, the situations where the transformation does not produce new art, but something that suggests a new category, an in-between state, something artified, are the most interesting. In my case, it is the relationship between art and sport that is in focus.[402]

The concept of artification is novel one, and even though the basic foundation has been laid down, there are various opinions about the meaning and function of artification, and even the existence of the whole phenomenon. The diverse perspectives on artification arise from different understandings of art and its relation to surrounding society. Today, it seems that the conception of art in the traditional sense is also shifting, and as a result a wide variety of conceptions of art exist. The constantly changing conceptions of art and the artistic will keep the discussion about artification and other borderline phenomena of art open for a long time.[403]

For artification to take place, it is, according to Ossi Naukkarinen, crucial to see art at least somehow separate from other cultural practices. This is the reason why artification is a contemporary phenomenon; in earlier historical periods (and in many cultures outside the western cultural sphere) art did not form a separate category – there were no conceptual tools for distinguishing art from craft or even science. During the modern period, the greater part of the twentieth century, there was also no place for artification; cultural practices were seen as autonomous within their own compartments; they were so clearly defined that crossing the boundaries was rare. In contemporary culture, the demarcation lines between the practices have grown porous and diffuse. The conception of a practice is never clear, but always a subject of negotiation.

401 The neologism artification, in the context I am using it, was first used in the book Taiteistuminen (Artification), edited by Ossi Naukkarinen, Yrjänä Levanto, and Susann Vihma, published in 2005.

402 Naukkarinen and Saito 2012.

403 Shiner 2012.

The phenomenon of artification is not seen only as a neutral fact. It seems to take place because of a shift in cultural trends; today, art is not seen as independent and autonomous to such a degree as it was a few decades ago. The realm of art has become more open, more collaborative with other cultural spheres. In addition to the artification occurring due to cultural change, there is also the process of active artification; some practices hope to benefit from adopting some features of art. Active artification is a consequence of the view that art can be used to achieve ends outside art. Naukkarinen mentions education, health-care, and business as parts of western culture where active artification is practiced. The use of features of art or the artistic are seen to give these practices more social or creative capital, which will in turn advance their core operations. The active use of art and the artistic in practical conditions makes artification a practical tool, rather than a purely academic conceptual tool.[404]

The idea of using art for purposes outside art, and the emergence of a new profession, *artifiers,* is not always welcomed. Yrjö Sepänmaa sees that the emergence of artification and the growing activity on the fringes of art is taking over from art proper, by drawing attention from it and its special features. According to Sepänmaa, artification produces an art-colored intermediate area that uses the resources of art and possibly marginalizes art.[405] Larry Shiner sees the negative effect of the current applications of artification in its flawed conception of art, artist, and creativity. Because of this erroneous conception of art, much of what is classed as practical artification is actually merely decoration. Instead of drawing ideas from contemporary art, current practical artification relies on the artistic ideals of the art of modernity; there, art is an autonomous realm that can create novel works without significant contact with other practices, while contemporary art has moved closer to the mundane world and its practices. The artist is seen as having a special character, being an obsessive creator, a genius capable of sudden creation, a utopian visionary, rather than a communicative professional working together with a network of colleagues and other professionals. Analogously, the understanding of creativity is narrow; creativity is presented as a creation of innovations and novelties, while within the practical work of an artist it can take many other forms.[406] Wolfgang Welsch finds the most serious problem with the conception of art used; art is often seen only as objects, museum pieces, while today's art takes various forms in addition to the physical objects, such as aesthetic interventions, strategies, and performances. Nevertheless, he sees that artification has taken a step further than contemporary artists – it has really brought art to life.[407]

At least when the aesthetic and artistic areas are seen as separate concepts, artification deviates from aestheticization. However, it can be seen as a consequence

404 Naukkarinen 2012.

405 Sepänmaa 2012.

406 Shiner 2012.

407 Wolfgang Welsch, "Artification - While Art Is Turning to Aesthetics beyond Art?" Paper presented at Artification Conference, Helsinki 17.8.2012. Author's notes.





of the deep-seated aestheticization that has transformed our relationship with the origins of knowledge. Sepänmaa sees artification as a special case of aesthetization, it being only a part of a wider phenomenon, but in addition sees them being in a complex, constantly changing chiasmatic connection. Naukkarinen admits that a connection between artification and aestheticization can be found, but also sees that thinking of artification as a special case of aestheticization narrows the concept too much: artification requires a conception of art and the artistic, while aestheticization does not necessarily do so. Furthermore, the required centrality of art and the artistic in the concept of artification gives attention to other types of features and values in art and the artistic than the aesthetic.[408]

Despite its novelty, and some ambiguity about the benefits of the concept of artification, I have found it a useful tool for probing the outskirts of the current conception of art. As the emphasis of aesthetics has moved away from art, and art in turn has de-aesthetized[409], artification provides a conceptual tool for analyzing the effects and use of art outside the artworld.

408 Sepänmaa 2012. Naukkarinen 2012.

409 Sepänmaa 2012.

# The Artification of Sport

Contemporary recreational sport has moved its emphasis from measurable achievement towards (aesthetic) experience. The traditional sports have also transformed to become more aesthetic, but the aesthetics of contemporary elite sport seems to be more surface aesthetics, focusing on the visual and spectacular aspects than the aesthetics, than in recreational sports.[410] When thinking of art in the traditional sense, the museum concept of art, contemporary elite sport is closer to art than the hobbyist sports. However, hobbyist sport shares more features with contemporary art, where the full art experience often requires participation. The aesthetic element in sport is certainly more pronounced than before and, along with the changes in the conception of art, some connections between art and sport can be drawn. Can any signs of artification be found in sport, and if so what forms can it take?

Analogously to other artification taking place in contemporary culture, there seems to be two kinds of artification in sport; the passive artification that is a result of cultural changes – sport and other physical cultures developing to be more experience oriented and art moving towards the everyday – and the active artification that is similar to the

410 For instance: Welsch 2005.

artification of businesses – bringing art into the context of sport in order to transfer the qualities and features of art to sport and sport events.

Using examples from the development of running, I attempt to figure out how signs of artification have surfaced in contemporary recreational running, and what changes in running practice have occurred to make that development feasible.

The analytical approach to running can take various forms. John Bale has used Henning Eichberg's division of running into playful, fitness, and achievement running, each of which provides a different experience as well as notion of running. His view is that playful running consists only of children's free frolicking; achievement running is serious result-oriented running; and fitness running fills the rest of the field.[411] Children's playful running cannot really be counted as a coherent sport, and competitive running has only a narrow existence outside the world of organized competitions. This leaves fitness running as the single truly free field where running can develop wider meanings, being open to artification.

The fitness running that forms the core of all of today's recreational running was first developed in the early 1960s in New Zealand, where running coach Arthur Lydiard saw running as applicable basic exercise for almost everyone. Before that, distance running had been a cruel achievement sport that was suitable only for experienced athletes.[412] Lydiard's idea behind the running exercise was that speed was not important – running was. In fact, one should run at a slow pace to build a good foundation for any other sport by developing the cardiovascular system.[413] The idea about fitness running, or jogging, spread all over the world a few years later, when Bill Bowerman and Waldo Harris published their book *Jogging* in 1967.[414]

The development of jogging towards the contemporary experience oriented running practice took some time. While the city-marathons with tens of thousands of participants form the most visible part of running culture today, they did not really exist at the beginning of the 1970s. For instance, the New York City Marathon, today attracting nearly 50 000 runners annually, was organized for the first time in 1970, with only 127 participants. By 1976 there were already 2090 entrants, but still a fraction of today's participants. In Britain, the first race with mass participation was arranged in Gateshead 1977 with around 600 runners. However, a year after this modest beginning The Sunday Times organized the National Fun Run in Hyde Park, with 12 000 runners.[415] In my native Finland, the trend of city marathons began a couple of years later, in 1980, when the first Helsinki City Marathon was organized. Participants in these runs had a different attitude compared with earlier competitive running. Now it was not important to win, or defeat as many other participants as possible, but to run together through the city and race against one's own limits. This change of emphasis in the goals of running made it possible to create art related practices within distance running. Today, the mass races provide a platform for various artistic manifestations and interventions. One of the most common ways to express oneself in a running event is to wear a fancy costume, a regular convention for many participants running for charity. When running takes extreme forms, as in today's ultra-marathons, the artistic expressions also turn more extreme: Jan Ryerse has made a ceremonial necklace from the lost and blackened toenails resulting from these races, most of which are his own.[416] These art-related practices are analogous to the traditional comprehension of art, in that they are clear images or objects, but are there practices that resemble contemporary works of art? Practices that do not take a directly presentable form, but work as aesthetic interventions, strategies, and performances.

In my first artistic project connected with this research, I ran Helsinki on the map. It works as an intervention, and there is a performative element. For me, it opened a new way of combining running and making art, and today the series has several parts. However, my running is clearly artistic running, not artified, because of my position as a professional artist and my intention to present the documented runs in public. Similarly kanarinka (artist Catherine D'Ignazio), whose work consists of running all the official evacuation routes in Boston, turns her running into art by presenting the act of running as recorded breathing.[417] My view is that artified running should be found closer to regular running, but should also include strategies similar to those found in my and kanarinka's artistic work.

In an earlier article[418], I have used parkour as an example of the possibilities for artified running. Parkour is a novel physical practice where the objective is to travel from spot A to spot B in a straight line, while negotiating incoming obstacles using special techniques and trying to keep the movement as fluent as possible throughout the course. Practicing parkour requires a curiosity towards the environment and perseverance in developing the physical skills of a traceur (a practitioner of parkour). One has to learn how to see new possibilities when encountering an urban space, and to turn the environment into a playground, employing it differently from its planned usage, while also

411 Bale 2004, 9-10.

412 Running had been an important part of physical education in the United Kingdom, and all pupils had to participate in distance running during the lessons, but the ideals of this compulsory running were closely related to competitive achievement sport. See Bale 2004, 18.

413 Latham 2013, 6.

414 Latham 2013, 1-3. Bowerman and Harris 1967.

415 The Great Run. http://www.greatrun.org/News/Article.aspx?nid=241, accessed 2.7.2013. The Guardian, Running Blog: "picture of the day," http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/the-running-blog/picture/2013/jun/19/running-blog-picture-of-the-day-1977-fun-run, accessed 2.7.2013.

416 Dunlap 2007.

417 "It takes 154,000 breaths to evacuate Boston" (2007). http://www.ikatun.org/evacuate-boston/, accessed 2.7. 2013.

418 Tainio 2012 a.

learning to sense the environment in a new bodily way and control one's body in co-operation with the environment. The general attitude towards the environment and one's body is playful, with a "creative/artistic sensibility." The traceur has to be aware of the environmental possibilities, and must at all times be ready to learn about them and adjust to new circumstances.[419]

The most significant difference between parkour practice and contemporary running culture(s) is that those involved in parkour are conscious of the creative attitude connected with their practice, while most of the contemporary fitness running community does not employ creative/artistic sensibility in their practice.[420]

However, an outside viewer can register instances where running has transformed towards the artistic, creating practices that can be seen as containing a creative/artistic sensibility. The creative/artistic sensibility in running does not produce artwork in a customary sense, but it affects the processes of running practice. The ritualization of running ultra-marathons seen in Christopher McDougall's book *Born to Run*[421] is one example. Physical objects – for instance, the afore mentioned ceremonial toenail necklace – can form an extension of the ritual practice. The unconscious practices that form the artification in distance running can take more mundane forms than participating in ultra-marathons; Pauli Jokinen's marathon training by touring the public artworks in Helsinki can be seen a partially artified practice. Instead of concentrating only on the efficiency of his exercise, he tried to see the combination of running and city in a new light.

While some examples of artification can be found in recreational running, current competitive running still seems to steer away from any contacts with art. There are obvious reasons for this; the confines of modern sport and the professional sports-world prohibit generating new kinds of practices. There are also the rules of competitive running, which prevent much personal expression from the athletes. The professionalization of competitive running additionally narrows the personal and creative space of the athletes. For instance, sponsorship regulations may inhibit expressions that could harm the sponsor's public image. There can be artified practices in competitive running, but they are even more private than in hobbyist running. The practices or occurrences of artistic spirit in competitive sports are also more likely to be rebellious in nature than constructive, or work by creating positive experiences, like the artified practices in fitness or lifestyle sports. For instance, in 1991 Finnish distance runners enacted the funeral procession for Finnish running in connection to national competitions, because they were unhappy with the recent decision to terminate the relay events in distance running competitions. The enactment was a pure performance, but it was also a rebellious demonstration. Similar acting would be impossible in the professionalized sport of today.[422]

My view is that the sport becomes more open to artification as it moves away from the ideals of achievement sport that have been the prevailing physical culture since the late nineteenth century. Abandoning the concept of competition and progressive achievement gives room for a more playful and creative attitude in connection with physical activity, which might be called sport or not. Bernard Suit's definition of playing a game as a voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles[423] is applicable to any sport – and actively applying its idea transforms sport into a creative practice.

In reality, the manifestations of artification in sport are still sporadic, and discerning them often requires a perceiver. Especially in the case of distance running, the practices are not consciously artified, but private processes and games that produce some variation in the monotonous routine of running. The best way to describe those few creative processes connected with distance running is to call them the seeds of artification. I believe that the situation is similar in other traditional sports, especially when the sports have a strong recreational significance; sport practices are moving away from the ideals of modern sport and starting to resemble the post-sport physical cultures.

419 More about the parkour practice: Atkinson 2009. Daskalaki, Stara, and Imas 2008. Wheaton 2004, 14.

420 Atkinson 2009, 179-180. Bale 2004, 16-17.

421 McDougall 2011.

422 Vettenniemi 1994, 63, 64 (image).

423 Suits 2005, 54-55.





# Artifying Sport

In addition to passive artification, there is an active tendency to connect art and sport, to artify sport. The objectives of this active artification vary to some extent. Unlike the artification of business, the active artification of sport is not oriented towards innovations, or helping the athletes and supporting professionals to better cope with the changing world[424], but to make sport more attractive, to add a new dimension, magnitude, and even new meanings to the sport experience. Specifically to whom sport is made more attractive depends on the case. The large sporting events use art as a supplementary attraction for visiting tourists, though sometimes there are genuine aspirations for a natural connection between art and sport. The *London 2012 Cultural Olympiad* is a good example of this type of endeavor. Another common reason for artifying sport is an attempt to encourage more people to exercise. This was the driving force behind the *Kulttuurikuntoilun keskuspuisto* (Central Park of Culture and Exercise), which was a part of the program of the European Capital of Culture in Turku, Finland 2011.

These examples are different in many ways: the project in Turku was an especially local one, targeting the citizens of Turku and inhabitants elsewhere in South-West Finland, while the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad reached around the British Isles and presented distinguished, internationally known artists.

424 Naukkarinen 2012.

The budgets were also from different worlds: the budget for the Cultural Olympiad was 79 million pounds (nearly 123 million euro), which was twice as much as the entire budget for Turku's Cultural Capital year.

Despite the fact that the projects represent totally different magnitudes, I will compare them in order to evaluate what kinds of approaches have been used for importing art into the context of sport. My view is that the projects share similar ideas and practices concerning the connection of art and sport. The main difference is in the scale and time-span. While the Central Park of Culture and Exercise in Turku was a one year project with permanent results intended for the future use, the Cultural Olympiad in the United Kingdom spanned over four years' time, also producing some permanent works of art.

## London

The London 2012 Cultural Olympiad was the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympic and Paralympic movements. The London 2012 Cultural Olympiad was a contemporary attempt to continue the tradition of the Art Olympics, which were a part of the Olympic Games in the first half of the twentieth century. After a few decades of being relegated to a low profile, the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad tried to revive the tradition as a contemporary arts festival.[425]

Spread over four years, the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad was designed to give everyone in the UK a chance to be part of the London 2012 Games, and to inspire creativity across all forms of culture, especially among young people. The project included a wide range of events, from local projects to large-scale performances across the UK – around 18 million people participated in the events.

The list of the aims of the Cultural Olympiad is long; these are the various hopes that should have been fulfilled by the project, but very few are in connection with sport:

*-Inspire and involve the widest and most inclusive range of UK communities,*
*-Generate sustainable long terms benefits to our cultural life*
*-Create outstanding moments of creative excellence which underline London's and the rest of the UK's global strength in the full range of performing arts and creative industries*
*-Offer unique opportunities to connect future generations with the UK's artistic communities and with their peers around the world*
*-Help to establish the distinguishing values and personality of the 2012 Games*
*-Promote contemporary London as a major world city, developing an enlightened policy of cultural diversity and inclusion*
*-Offer a platform for the many different communities of the United Kingdom to unite around shared celebrations*
*-Embrace the Olympic movement values of Excellence, Respect and Friendship and the Paralympic movement vision; to "Empower, Achieve, Inspire"*
*-Drive attention to the whole of the UK for tourism and inward investment and use the creative industries as a key driver for economic regeneration*[426]

The list of the values that the Cultural Olympiad should follow was also vast:

*-Celebrate London and the whole of the UK welcoming the world – our unique internationalism, cultural diversity, sharing and understanding*
*-Inspire and involve young people*
*-Generate a positive legacy (e.g. cultural and sports participation, audience development, cultural skills, capacity building, urban regeneration, tourism and social cohesion, international linkages)*
*-Relish the fusion of/synergy between culture and sport*
*-Encourage audiences towards active participation*
*-Animate and humanise public spaces (e.g. Street theatre, public art, circus skills, live big screen sites etc)*
*-Use culture and sport to raise issues of environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing*
*-Honour and share the values of both the Olympic and Paralympic movements*
*-Ignite cutting edge collaborations and innovation (between communities and cultural sectors)*
*-Enhance the learning, skills and personal development of young people by providing access to and from parallel education programmes.*[427]

Even though the Cultural Olympiad was organized in concordance with the greatest global sport event, neither the hopes presented nor the values the project should follow had much to do with sport. Only embracing the values of the Olympic and Paralympic movements' visions were mentioned in the hopes given for the Cultural Olympiad, while generating sports participation, relishing the fusion of/synergy between culture and sport, as well as using culture and sport for raising issues of environmental sustainability were listed in the values. Only the idea of relishing the "fusion of/synergy" between culture and sport required a new kind of connection between culture (art) and sport. More important than connecting the two areas of culture seemed to be advertising British culture, its uniqueness and excellence. Another important objective appeared to be providing a platform for various minorities, subcultures, and communities to present their cultures, as well as generating well-being and a more humane environment.

The Cultural Olympiad acted as an umbrella for various and diverse projects from local sport projects to huge open air festivals, from visual arts to theater, and from serious artworks to carnivals. Some of the events were based solely on voluntary work, while others got some funding from the Cultural Olympiad and other sources,[428] and some were paid commissions for the London 2012 Festival organized during the summer of 2012, which formed the finale of the whole Cultural Olympiad. While most of the projects carried out through the Cultural Olympiad program were small scale projects dealing

425 Garcia 2002, 6-8. Osborn 2008.

426 Garcia 2013, 4.

427 Garcia 2013, 4.

428 Arts Council England was the principal funder together with the Legacy Trust UK and the Olympic Lottery Distributor. Art Council website: "Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival." http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/arts-council-initiatives/cultural-olympiad/, accessed 4.7.2013.

with sport or culture, and not explicitly art, the London 2012 Festival mainly concentrated on large scale events in various, partly overlapping, categories. Altogether there were approximately 500 events held throughout the United Kingdom.

As the hopes and values assigned to the Cultural Olympiad predicted, most of the projects realized did not build any new or special connections between art and sport. They were purely cultural, art, or sport projects and events. However, there were several art projects that at least included sport or physical activity as a subject or general framework, and that were somewhat promising in the context of artifying sport.

At the very least, the imagery of the works created within such a project pictured sport, or the works were created at sport sites. Environmental artist Richard Long's: *Box Hill Road River* is one of these. This work is a giant, 100m long, painting that snakes along the spectacular Olympic cycling race route. The work takes its inspiration from the traditional road graffiti created by fans during the Tour de France, where the cycling fans leave chalk messages on the road for specific teams and cyclists. Long's work will remain as a permanent memory of the 2012 Olympic Games.

More ambitious combinations of art and sport combined physical activity with an art event, or alternatively experiencing the work in a proper way required the spectator's activity. Jeremy Deller's *Sacrilege* presents a more hands-on approach in combining art and physical experiences. His work is basically a life-sized, air-filled replica of Stonehenge for people to bounce around in. Even though this work is carnivalesque, a light-hearted piece of art presenting Britain's national heritage, it shows something about the possibilities of combining presence, physical activity, and visual art.

The closest connection between art and sport was created in projects where the work or event was created by using some means of sport. *Speed of Light*, an event organized by the Glasgow-based company NVA, is an example of this third category. The massive happening took place on several evenings in August 2012, at the Arthur's Seat mountain in Edinburgh. Hundreds of runners wearing specially designed light suits took to the intricate path networks on the slopes of the mountain. The walking audience became a part of the work, carrying portable light sources set against the dark features of the hill. Every time the performance was held it had a different look, as it was created by the collective action of the runners and the audience, the landscape, and the weather. Even though the volunteer runners and the audience were part of the performance, it was best seen from outside the area, appearing as a giant art installation.

Another work of art, *Forest Pitch* by Craig Coulthard, took the potential in combining art and sport, as well as mixing the maker's and spectator's roles, even further. Forest Pitch was realized near Selkirk, at the Scottish Borders, and was based on building a full-size football field in a pristine forest. The main event consisted of two football matches played on the field. The matches were played during one day, between teams compiled of people recently moved to Britain and having an immigrant background. The spruce trees felled to make space for the pitch were used to create the goalposts, benches, and a changing room. In addition, the teams wore football strips designed by Scottish school children. The audience was transported to the site by special coaches. After the matches were played, on August 25th 2012, native trees were planted along the markings, creating an evolving, living sculpture that will hold the memories of the event. The site will be freely accessible to the public for up to 60 years.

Coulthard's work fulfilled several of the conditions for the intentional artifying of sport. There was clearly a work of art, both as an event and as an object, and most probably as an experience too. There was real sport, even though the athletes were amateurs – in the original meaning of the word. On the other hand, the event, like all the other projects presented, stayed safely in the category of art. Although sport was involved in the project, there was no in-between state that is expected for artification.

### *Turku*

Central Park of Culture and Exercise was designed to transform the surroundings of River Aura, which flows through the city of Turku, into a more vibrant, functional, and pleasant setting through culture. The objectives of the project were:

*"Along the banks of River Aura and in the city space, the Central Park of Culture and Exercise treats people of all ages and social groups to applied art, cultural exercise routes, kayaking and rowing, events and a Dream Park. "*

And:

*"Promoting the physical, mental and social well-being of residents and visitors, the project leaves a lasting mark on Turku's urban culture and image."*

The program was realized through five project categories: *Cultural exercise routes, Functional works of art, Outdoor events, The Dream Park,* and *River Aura - paddling and rowing.*[429]

Analogous to the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad, many of the projects were connected solely to cultural or sport events, but there were also some similarly successful combinations. For instance, cultural exercise routes produced a combination of having a brisk walk and exploring the public artworks in Turku. In the context of artifying sport, the functional works of art formed the most promising project. The project consisted of three public artworks with an intention to attract people to exercise. Art was applied for external purposes, which corresponds to the idea of artification. Two of the works were located by a popular riverside path where passing walkers, runners, and cyclists are able to enjoy them. However, the connection to sport or exercise is rather thin: the first work, Sakari

429 Turku 2011 website: "Central Park of Culture and Exercise." http://www.turku2011.fi/en/ohjelmahanke/499/info, accessed 9.8.2012. Not all of the projects were created for the European Capital of Culture; some were organized in connection with the general facelift of rundown sites (the Dream Park) or were already initiated projects (cultural exercise routes and River Aura – paddling and rowing).

Peltola's sculpture *A Pen and a Tough Bone*[430] is a stone sculpture representing a doghouse and a giant bone. The sculpture is connected with exercising by allowing its use for climbing, and as a support for stretching. The other work on the same path is Eero Merimaa's sculpture *Some Technoflowers*[431], which reacts to movement by turning on LED lights inside the flowers when somebody passes the work. Merimaa's sculpture has a somewhat stronger connection to exercise and sport, but it also has its problems. Without the lights the work is just a sculpture, which means that during spring, summer, and much of the autumn it is not functioning as it should, and during winter the number of the passers-by declines.

The third work, *Hide and Seek*[432] by Oona Tikkaoja, is located on the streets of Turku. It consists of thirty miniature bronze statues made by local children. Tikkaoja held workshops where children had the chance to realize small statues in soft wax. The resulting statues were then cast in bronze, and finally hidden on the streets according to the childrens' plans. The only way to see the works is to take a walk, following a map with instructions revealing the locations of the statues.

430 Turku 2011 website: "Venyttele veistoksen avulla." http://www.turku2011.fi/uutiset/venyttele-veistoksen-avulla_fi, accessed 9.8.2012.

431 Turku 2011 website: "Teknokukkaset tuovat valoa ja väriä jokirantaan." http://www.turku2011.fi/uutiset/clone-of-teknokukka-set-tuovat-valoa-ja-varia-jokirantaan_fi, accessed 9.8.2012.

432 Turku 2011 website: "Pienoisveistokset piilottelevat jokirannassa." http://www.turku2011.fi/uutiset/pienoisveistokset-piilottelevat-jokirannassa_fi-0, accessed 9.8.2012.



Because some of the statues are very hard to find, GPS-coordinates are also given. This work takes the connection between art and exercise to a new level; the statues really motivate one to explore the streets from a different point of view.[433] Nevertheless, the work does not really artify sport, if sport is seen as more demanding physical activity than just a leisurely walk in the city. However, it does lead to extended activity, because after one starts the search there is a desire to find all the statues, an enterprise that can take quite a while. Analogous to the projects realized as part of the Cultural Olympiad, the functional artworks in Turku are clearly art, even though there are hopes for other kinds of activation and promoting well-being.

Both of the projects in London and Turku attempted to connect art and sport in a way that could be called the intentional artifying of sport but, in my opinion, both fell short. Despite the successful and novel combinations of art and sport, art remained art and sport remained sport. Both of the projects were able to bring art closer to sport, but proper sport never moved closer to art.

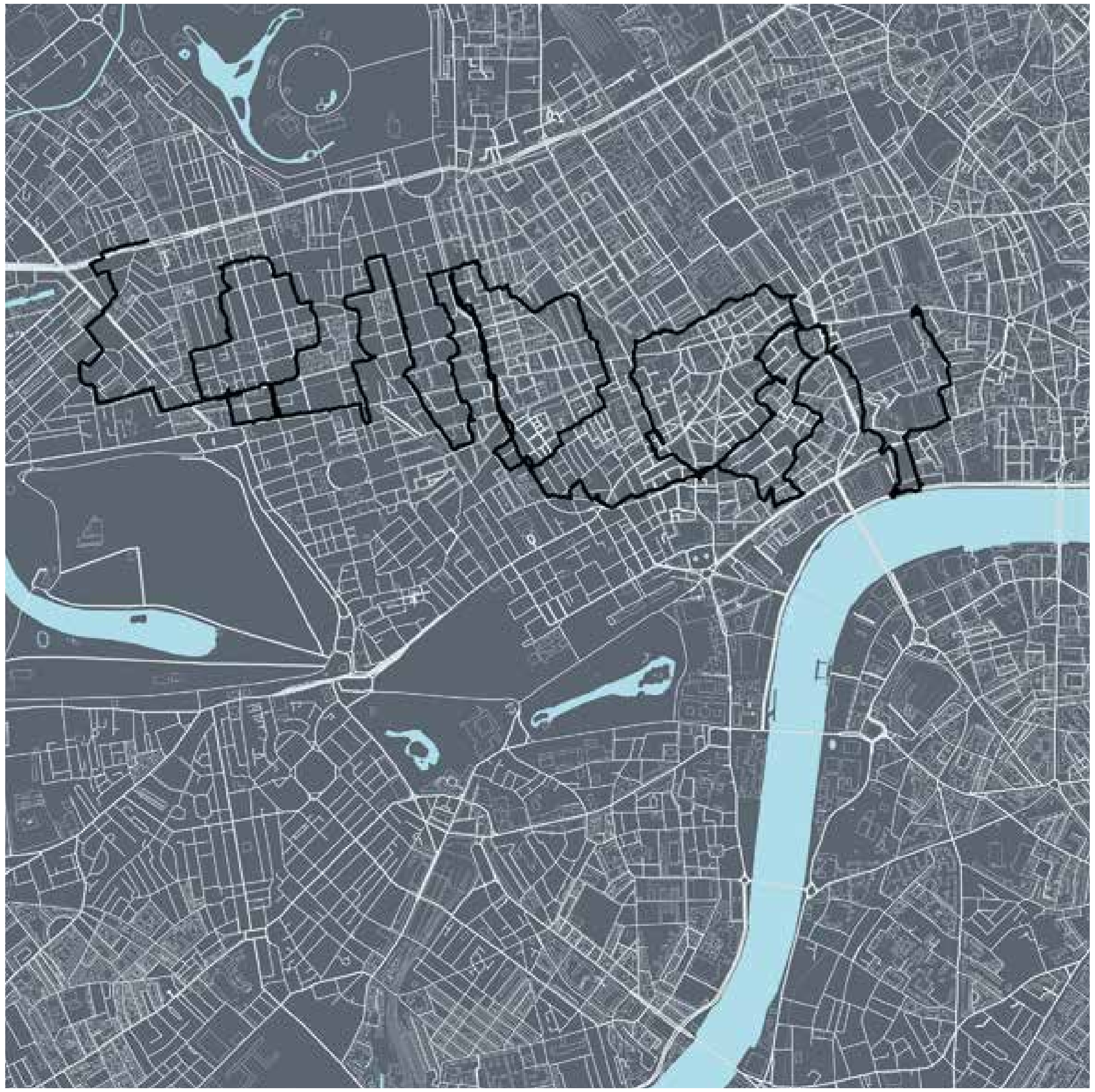
433 Tainio 2012 b.



# 8 • What I Think When I Think About Running



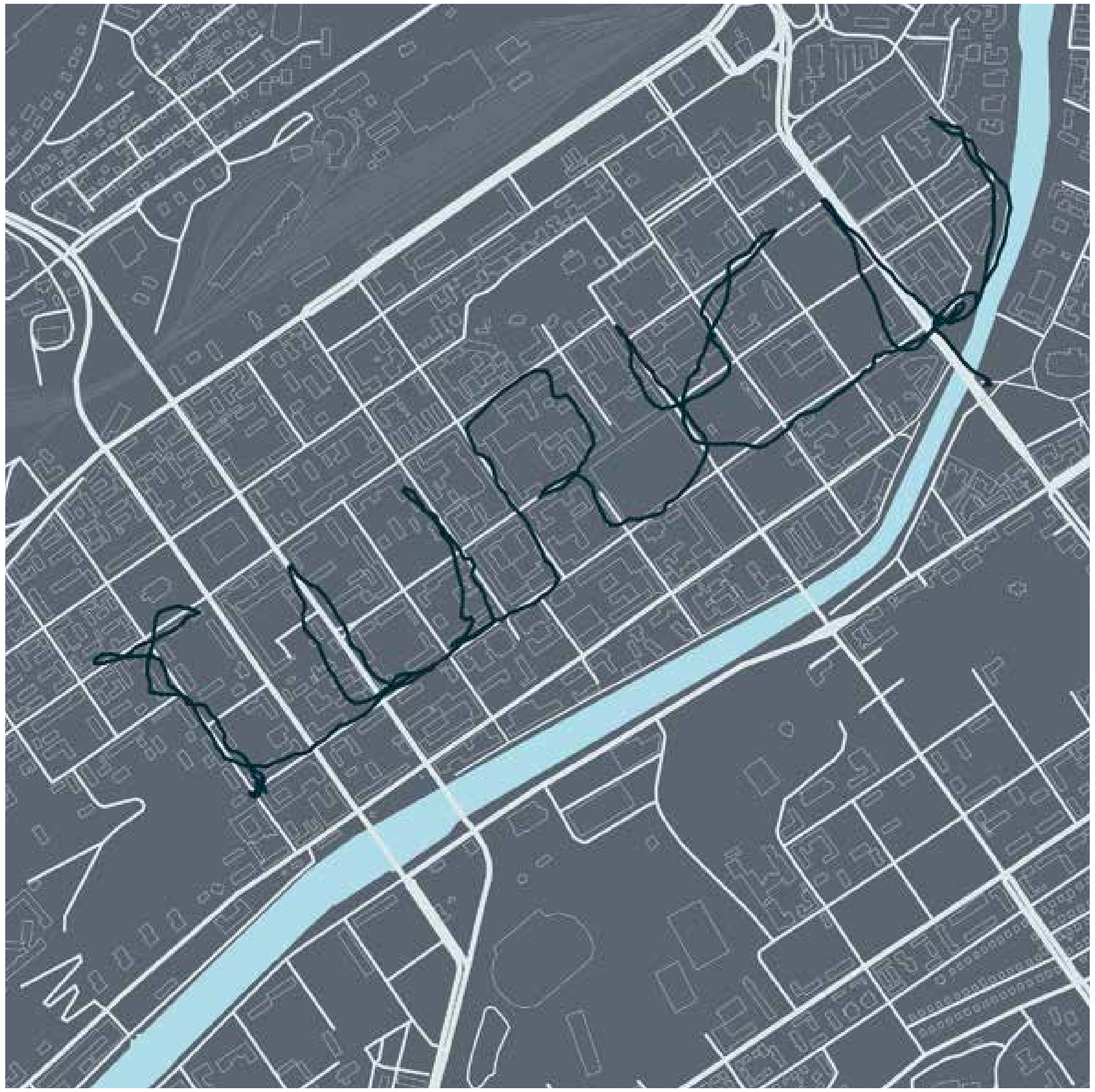
*Attempt to Run...*



*London (2011)*



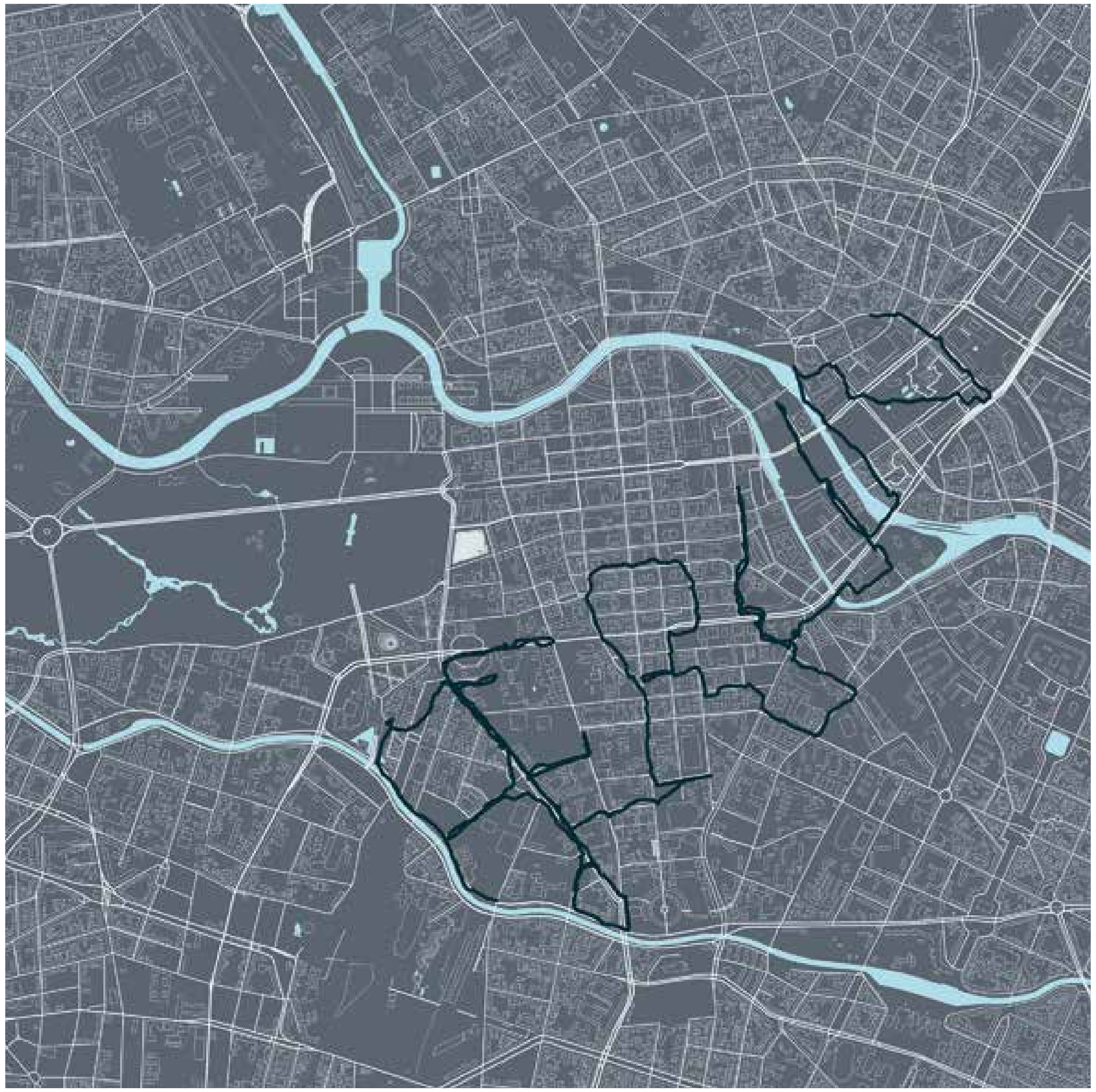
*Lisboa (2009)*



*Turku (2008)*



*Helsinki (2008)*



*Berlin (2010)*



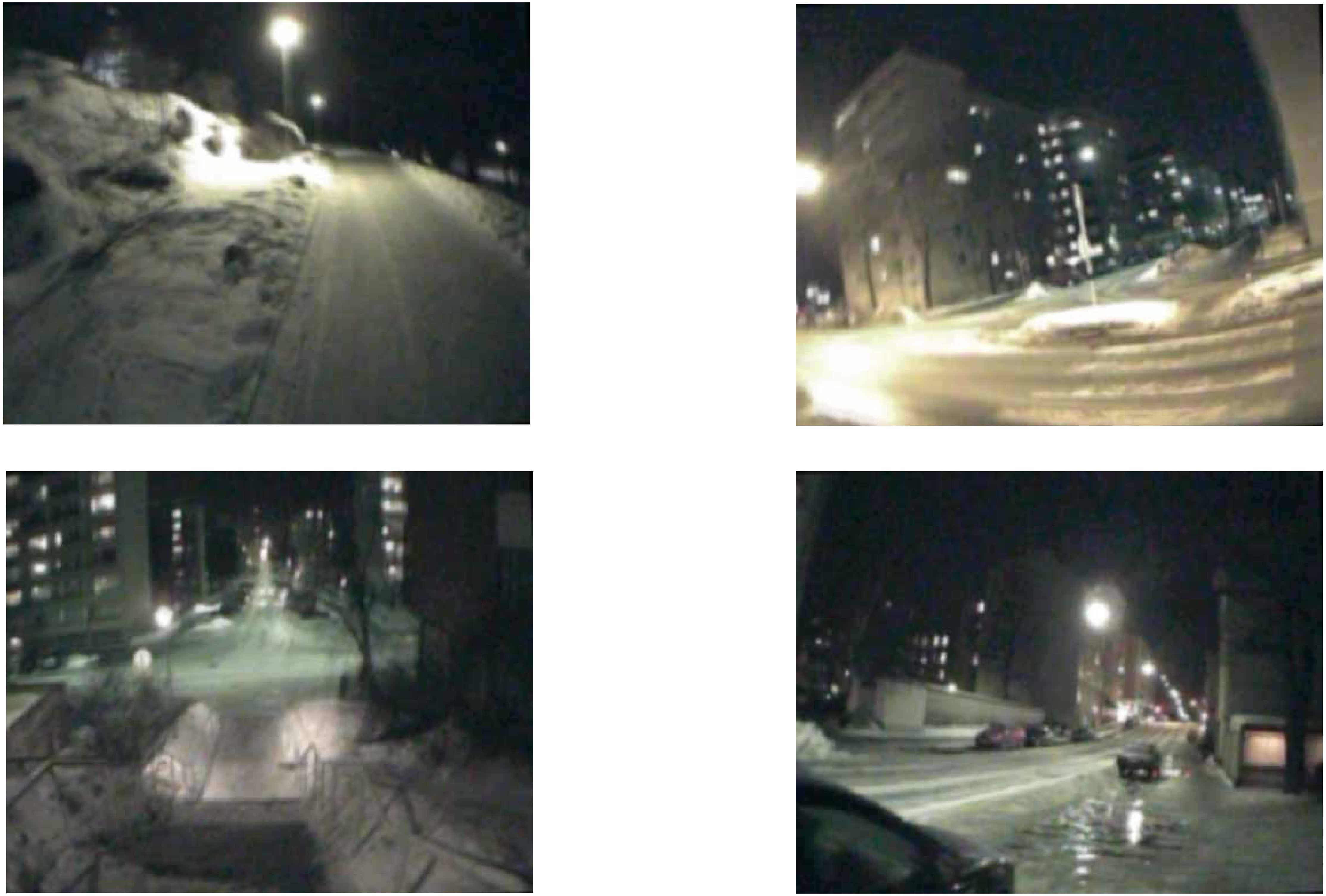
*Vaasa (2008)*







*Finland Runs (details)*



*Artistic Running in Central Turku (stills from video)*



*A Runner's Career*



******* 2000




******* 2000





***** 2001-2007




****** 2007-2008




***** 2008-*



****** 2009-*






***** 2010-*



******** 2011-*




*A False Memory*



A False Memory (details)





The first two art projects I conducted as part of my research brought sport into the sphere of art. In them, sport was mainly a subject of art, and a tool for artistic thinking. The exhibitions presented deliberations about the conditions of contemporary sport and art. The third exhibition took place outside the realm of traditional art institutions. It brought art closer to the field of sport by presenting the results of the art project in the Sports Museum of Finland, located in the Helsinki Olympic Stadium. Changing the context had additional and unforeseen consequences. Exhibiting artworks in a new context produced new readings and parallels between the artworks and sport; now situated deep in the field of sports, the works of art produced different thoughts than in the safe context of the artworld.

In the contemporary artworld, employing sport as a source for artistic work is just choosing one subject among the many possible; it does not change the practices of today's art. Although bringing contemporary art into the context of sport is not a completely new idea, the location of the third exhibition provided me with a change of perspective. Working in the context of a sports museum is somewhat different from many other approaches to combining art and sport; exhibiting art in a sports museum can be compared with presenting artworks in a cultural or historical museum.

The permanent exhibition in the Sports Museum of Finland exhibits the cultural history of Finnish sports, Finnish sport heroes throughout time, and in addition has a large section about the Helsinki 1952 Olympic Games. The objects in the permanent exhibition consist of historical sport equipment and memorabilia contextualized with accompanying texts, photographs, and videos. The story of the historical development of sport in Finland is told through separate objects presented in showcases, which are contextualized through the use of audiovisual material. The audiovisual material concentrates on the festive moments of sport: the competitions, the records, the winners. The everyday moments are visible in the form of training logs and other similar items. In addition to competitive sport, the development of sport as an everyman's exercise is also part of the permanent exhibition. Moreover, the dark moments of Finnish sport are not avoided; for instance, the doping scandal in Finnish cross-country skiing at the Lahti 2001 World Championships is exhibited as a part of the history. The museum organizes a few shorter exhibitions every year. Sometimes they are in connection with a special sport event, and sometimes

the exhibition is aimed at schoolchildren, and some of them present a less well-known athlete. In addition to these regular sports related exhibitions, there have been some art exhibitions before mine. These art exhibitions have had a solid connection to sport.

The particular context of the exhibition made this project significantly different from the previous ones from the outset. Firstly, the space was not regularly used for art exhibitions, and the museum visitors were more interested in sport than art. Although I did not want to compromise my art because of the different audience, I decided to take the difference into consideration and open up the ideas behind the works for the museum visitors more clearly than I usually would. In the previous exhibitions, I had had only a short artist's statements and a list of the titles of the works, but this time I decided to write somewhat longer texts to accompany the artworks.

In addition, my works were going to be presented next to the most important Finnish sport memorabilia – including Matti Nykänen's medals from various Olympic Games and World Championship games, Paavo Nurmi's medals and personal belongings, and Jari Kurri's Stanley Cup ring. The permanent exhibition would compete for the visitors' interest against my exhibition. Furthermore, my argumentation about sport, presented in the form of artworks, would be seen against the history of (Finnish) competitive sport. There would be competition between my art, unknown to most of the visitors, and these famous athletes and glorious sporting moments.

My research period was tapering towards its end, so I wanted to return to my questions about running for a second time and attempt to see how exploring sport through research had affected my understanding of it and its artistic possibilities. Even though I was returning to a previous subject, my intent was not to create a final diagnosis about the relations between art and sport, but to investigate my changing understanding. Furthermore, I wanted to explore my own current thoughts about making art and practicing the sport of distance running. The project did not result in a final vision of art and sport, but an intermediate stopping point in the continuously changing relationship between the two.

In the search for material about contemporary running culture, I had read Haruki Murakami's memoir *What I Talk About When I am Talking About Running*, where the author tells the history of his running habit and how it has shaped his lifestyle.[434] Contemplating the features that make Murakami's running habit a personal one contributed to formulating the foundation of the art project and the exhibition. Thinking over Murakami's account, I tried to figure out which patterns in my running separated it from the general western or Finnish practice, and how I should present them in the artworks.

I focused on the recreational running practice as I saw it taking place in my own life, as well as the current running practice in Finland as I saw it at the time. Basically, I explored the development of my own running habit and those phenomena that I had been following in contemporary running. Murakami's book also provided the name for the exhibition. Under the title *What I Think When I Think About Running,* I took a fresh look at various aspects of contemporary recreational distance running.

434 Murakami 2008.

Naturally, my vision of the significance and position of running in today's culture had matured since I started my research, but reworking some themes that had been treated in the first exhibition took the last project in a circular pattern of thought. When I started the first art project, I did not have much knowledge about the field that I was about to study, and now I would explore the same theme through more knowledgeable eyes.

The context of the resulting exhibition also shifted the emphasis somewhat from my original ideas. The juxtaposition between the main collection of the sports museum and my exhibition in the side room was strong, and transformed the reading of the artworks. My artworks, relating to contemporary running practice, were automatically paralleled with the achievements of the great Finnish runners Paavo Nurmi, Lasse Virén, and others. Furthermore, the Sports Museum of Finland is situated at the Helsinki Olympic Stadium, the most iconic sport venue in Finland, which gave the exhibition another layer of possible meanings. The obvious comparison between the exhibited artworks and the museum collection was not my intention, as only one of the works had a direct connection with the permanent collection and the others were designed to work independently from the special exhibition context, but inevitably the physical presentation next to the "hall of fame" of Finnish sport constituted a strong link between sporting history and my artistic work. However, the unintended parallels between the permanent collection did not produce hindrances to the exhibition as a whole – it just brought a new level to the works and my original intentions.

# The Artworks

### *Attempt to Run...*

*Running Helsinki* from the first exhibition produced such interesting results that I continued to run cities on a map. The concept of the *Attempt to Run Helsinki* grew gradually into a series of several works located in different cities in Finland as well as abroad. In the exhibition, six runs from six cities were presented; Helsinki, Turku, and Vaasa in Finland, and Lisbon, Berlin, and London abroad.

There are several possible approaches to perceiving the work; the first one I had when starting the project in 2008, an artistic variation of the Finnish sport legend, is only one of them. Later, I have considered the runs as interventions in a public space, as my routes had taken me places where a runner is not a common sight. I had run through some run down areas in Lisbon, crossed the former Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin, and along Oxford Street in rush hour in London.

Negotiating one's way through a city using a predefined and, if compared to logical traveling in a city, arbitrary route leads one to see the city from unexpected angles. Even familiar places look new when they are approached from unusual directions. Despite the effort of running and keeping on the course, I enjoyed finding unexpected places. Naturally, many times my route has taken me into nondescript places, dull banking quarters and anonymous housing areas, but I think of these parts of the run as a contrast to the interesting places and landscapes.

Even though the artwork is presented as a printed two-dimensional figure that is distanced from the original act, running the route and recording it accurately forms a fundamental part of the work. The person watching the artwork can hopefully relate the line on the map to the physical strain that is needed to run the line in the real city. Without the act of running the course, the conceptual structure of the work would change totally. The performative act would turn into an imaginative play, a proposal. However, the act of running did not feel only like artistic work. It was more like a regular run in an unfamiliar city. Staying on a predetermined course makes it more difficult to enjoy the flow of running, but in a strange environment running would not be easy anyway. Despite the fact that running and staying on the course form the uppermost level of experience, there is a private performative level; even though the act of making art is not visible for other people in the streets, I know what I am doing. However, the real artistic work takes place while planning the route, and during the process of plotting the GPS-data on a map and constructing the look of the artwork.[435]

## *Finland Runs*

The idea of this video installation was to bring the variety of today's Finnish runners together in one place. The work is an update of the video installation *Runners* in the first exhibition. In that previous work I had presented a series of portraits of Finnish runners, but only standing still. Later, I had played with an idea about a work where the runners would be running around the exhibition space through various screens. The initial idea evolved into the four screen video installation *Finland Runs,* where arbitrarily chosen runners parade in pairs across the room.

Distance running as an exercise has never been as popular as it is now. If you look around the popular running routes, you will see runners of all sizes and shapes. Distance running, and participating in half and full marathons, is no longer reserved for athletic people. The video installation let the visitor observe in how many different ways the practice of running can be implemented; some of running styles are effective and graceful, some of them less so, but still propelling the runner towards her goal in all kinds of weather, from the heat of the summer to the freezing winter. The work brings forth the other runners that pursue their sport in a similar manner as mine, but all for their own unknown reasons. My attempt was to allow all the different runners to run together, and show that there is now one model for the contemporary sport hero. This run has no winner, just brief encounters on a run.

The real time video installation *Finland Runs* (Suomi Juoksee) consists of four screens stretched across the exhibition hall. Pairs of runners run through the screens, arbitrarily running together or passing each other. After a few rounds through the screens one or both of the runners change, and a new pair starts chasing each other. The runners' movement are slowed down moderately in order to extend their appearances on the screens.

## *Artistic Running in Central Turku*

This video returns to the practice of scribbling texts over urban areas, from the series *Attempt to Run*. Instead of marking the route on a map, the work exposes the maker's point of view, combining the artist's and runner's experiences. A literal combination of art and running exposes the practical reality of artistic running. The video shows the meaninglessness of my typographic running routes. Even though there is a reason for running the particular route in the form of the word ART, it is not visible while actually running through it.

## *A Runner's Career*

For a reason unknown even to myself, I have kept all of my running shoes since the start of my current practice. I decided to illustrate the development of my running pursuit by photographing the shoes in a similar style as footwear is presented in catalogues and advertisements. They are my shoes, with their personal scuff marks, but at the same time they are also anonymous footwear that any contemporary runner can identify with.

## *A False Memory*

Years before I planned to have this exhibition, I visited the Sport Museum. After the visit, I clearly recalled seeing a gilded pair of Lasse Virén's spikes in the museum's showcase. The pair of spikes that I remembered seeing were the same one Virén had worn when he won the 5000 meters at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, and the same pair he had waved in the air afterwards, causing disapproval and consequently some comments about his professionalism. In spite of my clear memory, there are no gilded Virén spikes in the museum, but instead one of Paavo Nurmi's spikes. This was told to me when I visited the museum for the first time in connection with my exhibition. I was so disappointed to learn the truth; Paavo Nurmi, because of his surly personality, is my least favorite of the Finnish runners, and Lasse Virén was a childhood hero, whose runs I can still remember somehow even though in those days I was just in kindergarten.

435 Tainio 2012 a.

I decided to turn this false memory to my benefit, and to realize the missing spikes in the museum. I was allowed to use one of the museum showcases in my exhibition, so making a counterfeit exhibit was possible. I obtained a pair of second hand spikes, and reconstructed Virén's spikes from photographs using various materials. The result had the shape and feel of the 1970s spikes, and was finalized by "gilding" with fake leaf gold. In addition to the faked spikes in the showcase, the work had a back lit text – in a similar shape as the museum's accompanying texts – that explained my false memory.[436]

436 English translation of the original text :
*What I remember about Lasse Viren*
*My recollections about Lasse Viren are rather thin:*
*I do remember that he won. Twice. In two Olympics. Altogether four Olympic gold medals. Viren was exceptional, because his heart was larger than others. Or so they said to young boys. Once he fell during the race and still became the Olympic Champion. For his luck, it was still a long way to the finishing line.*
*Another time, when he won, he went to the lap of honor bare footed and waved his sneakers in the air. It was widely disapproved. Today it would be just normal behavior. There are sponsors and everything else. I have probably seen this happening on television, because I was already in school in 1976.*
*Or the memory has attached to my mind somewhere on the way from childhood to today. The memory is so weak that I couldn't remember did it happen in Munich or Montreal. I had to check it. Montreal it was. And the competition was 10 kilometers race. Especially well I recalled that those running shoes were displayed in the Sports Museum – gilded. It was also a false memory. The only gilded running shoe was Paavo Nurmi's.*
*I repair my memory about Lasse Viren's shoes and bring them into the museum*
*- at least for a moment.*

# Artistic Transitions

The third exhibition ended my artistic work in connection with this research, and it also closed the circle with the same theme as the first exhibition. Despite the seemingly same subject – contemporary recreational running – the exhibitions are not the same. The first exhibition supplied a starting point for the whole research process. At the time, I did not know which direction my research would take, and I did not have a proper idea about the historical background, current condition, and future direction of either art or sport. When I started working on the exhibition *What I Think When I Think About Running*, I had done most of my theoretical background work and was formulating the first versions of the conclusions of the research. Pursuing the final and still transient viewpoint about the connection between art and sport in the context of this research was the most important task of the last art project. What is the relationship between modern sport and today's wider idea of physical culture? What is the relationship between the original ideas of achievement and trying one's best, measuring and records and the contemporary ideas about the omnipresence of aesthetics and the idea of sport – or physical culture – as the care of the body? How do the disappearing borders between cultural practices, in my case art and sport, affect their future? While the first exhibition was seeking the first end of a rope in order to untangle it, and the second one balancing in the middle of it, the last exhibition can be seen as making a knot in order to keep my intellectual coil together.

While the two first exhibitions were forward-looking experiments in connecting art and sport, *What I Think When Think About Running* looked both back and forward. I was collecting important artistic findings along my expedition, fitting them together with my accumulated theoretical knowledge, and developing the final outcome of the research. Taking a look at the series of exhibitions in retrospect, they form a defined continuity; the ends come together nicely, as does the middle exhibition, as exploring the field in between art and sport finds its place. The last exhibition does not deliver a final judgment or resolution, but connects the beginning and the end. It attempts to use the material collected during the journey to provide some potential outsets for the common future of art and sport.

# 9 • Sport in Art – Art as Sport



Sport has been a subject of artworks since the advent of early modern art, using the images of either the athletes or the sport events: from the beginning of modern sport, artists have used sport as one possible subject and a source of inspiration, together with other subjects drawn from modern and urban life. During the period of modern art, there were two ways to combine sport and art: the first practice of combining sport into art was more traditional; the greatest sport heroes were immortalized in public artworks, usually as statues. For example, the Paavo Nurmi statue was commissioned from the then foremost Finnish sculptor Wäinö Aaltonen 1924. The habit of memorializing famous athletes with statues has continued into the present; however, the general artistic quality of the statues has declined since the early twentieth century. Another way to include sport in art was to picture the practice as an integral part of the modern world, as a new and exciting phenomenon: runners and cyclists were seen as representations of the future world, similar to airplanes and cars. This viewpoint can be found in the works of the avant-garde artists.[437]

Today's art does not treat sport only as a subject that is pictorial, but as one that provides various perspectives either to raise questions about sport and the practices and structures related to it, or using connotations drawn from sport to open up issues outside both sport and art. Sport is still a subject of art, but often from a different perspective: instead of just portraying athletes and illustrating sport events, art is presenting criticism of some aspects of sport, transforming sport, creating imagined sports, and using sport in art for external purposes as well as employing sport as a medium of artistic work. The connection between art and sport may emphasize the visual and identifiable elements of sport as a part of the artwork, or the more conceptual elements when the connection with sport is more open. However, art that attempts to develop a connection with sport but is presented without an instant connection to sport usually needs to provide some background information about its association to sport. Besides, the visual or conceptual connection between sport and art is not the only way of incorporating sport into art. In the context of artifying sport, many artworks are simply brought into the context of sport and thus do not necessarily have any apparent connection to sport except the location or timing of the work.

437 For instance: *Les Coureurs* (The Runners) 1924 by Robert Delaunay, *Cyclist* 1913 by Natalia Goncharova, and *Dynamism of a Cyclist* 1913 and *Dynamism of a Football Player* 1913 by Umberto Boccioni.

# Sport in Contemporary Art

## *Picturing It*

When contemporary artists use sport as a subject for their art, their perspective on sport differs from the art works portraying sport heroes, and most often the glorifying attitude towards the athletes that has been prevalent in earlier art is missing. Tracey Moffat's images of athletes in her series *Fourth* are the images of disappointment, the images of failure; the athletes in Moffat's photographs have just noticed that they are the first ones not getting medals in the Olympic Games in Sydney.[438] Monumental works presenting sport also try to find novel perspectives. Juhana Blomstedt's *Vapaaheitto* (Free Throw) (2010) turns a moment for a local basketball team into an abstraction – the only thing visualized is the arc from the player's hands to the hoop.[439] While Blomstedt's artwork has a generally positive attitude towards sport, Moffat's photographs articulate criticism against the brutality of competitive sports: behind the winners there are many disappointed athletes who never get into the spotlights.

A prolonged artistic work with sport as the theme can produce works where sport only works as a frame. While working as an artist in residence at the Olympic park in London between September 2010 – January 2012, Neville Gabie explored the coming Olympic Games from various angles. During his residency, Gabie had access to the sites under construction, and the ability to contact the people working in the background of the future Olympics. Throughout the two-week period of the Olympic Games the focus is on the athletes, but there is a large group of people whose work has made the event possible. The scale of the background work and the construction of the arenas are hard to understand. Many of Gabie's works deal with the combination of sports and the magnitude of the Olympic project, as well as the transformation of a former industrial area into the Olympic arena. Sport is mostly implicit in Gabie's works; it works as glue that connects the locations, the people, and the excessive transformation of the site into a united series of artworks. The short film *9.58* has a duration of 9.58 seconds, the same as Usain Bolt's world record time for the 100 meters, and is fashioned from a combination of 239 still images of the workers building the Olympic Stadium. *Twelve Seventy* is a documentary film about the daily life of an Olympic bus driver and keen long distance swimmer, Semra Yusuf. As a part of the documentary, Yusuf swims the exact distance of the bus route she is driving, 1270 meters, in the Olympic pool. In addition, Gabie tested his own endurance when trying to sit in every seat in the Olympic Stadium. Spending 69 hours on the project *Every seat in the stadium*, he managed to sit on only about 40000 seats, just half of the stadium's capacity. Gabie's work as the artist in residence is a project where art and sport are combined in a balanced way. The artworks do not try to surpass the spectacle of sport, but highlight the background, and wonder at the aspects that are usually seen as obvious and thus overlooked.[440]

438 Guggenheim New York website: "Tracey Moffatt." . http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/collection-online/artists/bios/5094, accessed 25.11.2013.

439 Helsinki City Artmuseum website: "Free Throw," http://www.taidemuseo.fi/english/veisto/veistossivu.html?id=557&sortby=statue, accessed 25.11.2013.

440 Neville Gabie's internet pages: "Olympic Park Artist in Residence," http://www.nevillegabie.com/works/olympic-park-artist-in-residence/, accessed 12.9.2013. Greatlengths2012 website: "Neville Gabie, artist in residence on the olympic park." http://greatlengths2012.org.uk, accessed 12.9.2013. "London 2012 Olympic Park artist-in-residence appointed." *BBC News*, 14.10.2010. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-11752625, accessed 12.9.2013.

## *Criticism Of*

While both Moffat and Gabie are somewhat critical towards the world of competitive sport, they are not totally against modern sport culture. Finnish artists Visa Suonpää and Patrik Söderlund, working together as group IC-98, see the organization of sport only as power play where the sport fanatics rule over those who do not care for sports. Their publication *Run and Die*[441] combines Finnish sport history and personal memories, forming a bleak image of Finnish sport enthusiasm and its consequences. IC-98 builds a narrative that parallels Finnish baseball[442] with preparing for war and running marathons to the ultimate sacrifice, death. These historical views mix with personal memories about physical education in school: during the baseball games one of the artist's (their recollections are anonymous) always missed the three strikes on his turn at bat and was "burned", dismissed from the game for the rest of the inning. When their team was playing in the field, trying to catch the ball, the storyteller was hiding in the back of the field and usually missed catching the ball if it ever came near him, thus completing the failure.

Not only is the organization of modern sport a subject of criticism. Eva and Franco Mattes have also presented contemporary sport business in a critical light. Their project *Nikeplatz* (2003) in Vienna, Austria, faked a Nike advertisement campaign. The artists proposed that the Karlsplatz, one of Vienna's central squares, should be named Nikeplatz with a giant Nike-logo, the Swoosh, erected on the lawn in the middle of the square. The work consisted of an installation, representing the Nikeplatz information center, a website,[443] and an accompanying performance, where three fake Nike workers presented the plan to the local residents. Even though that the artists do not admit

441 Söderlund and Suonpää 2004.

442 A national sport that resembles and is developed from American baseball.

443 "Nikeground.com – Rethinking space," http://0100101110101101.org/home/nikeground/website/index.html, accessed 4.9.2013

that the work is especially sport related, it is plausible to think that Nike's visible position in the sport business was one of the reasons for using their brand in the work.[444]

### *Transforming*

The serious attitude within the sport-world can be a subject of ridicule in contemporary art: a common artistic approach to sport is viewing sport through irony. Artworks belonging to this category employ various methods. One of the most common is "bending" sport equipment or sports grounds, either using real objects or creating images of such situations. Several examples of employing this approach were shown in the exhibition *Sportivement vôtre* (2004): Ange Leccia's *Nou Camp* presents two football goals pushed together in a way that prevents making any goals and removes any point of playing. Philippe Ramette's *Plongeoir* is a diving board mounted inaccessibly high over a grass field. More complex applications of transformed sport were also presented: Marie Denis's *Terrain de foot à la française* looks like the chalked borders of a football field, but there are extra elements that transform the sport field into a blueprint of a baroque garden. In addition, the work is situated in front of the palace in the Domaine départemental de Chamarande, following the baroque fashion in the placement of gardens. If compared with the two first artworks, *Terrain de foot à la française* also challenges the cultural origins of sport, rather than simply representing sport as a ridiculous activity.[445]

Transforming sport can take a more analytical form: Thomas Westphal's exhibition *Playontology* (2004) was an ambitious exploration of the materiality of sports equipment. Westphal, for instance, presented the construction of various balls used in sport by meticulously dismantling them into the smallest possible parts, and then presenting the dissected balls in taxonomical order. In addition, he exhibited a fake archeological scene by using the protective gear used in ice hockey and American football to present bodies in a burial chamber.[446]

### *Imagined Sports*

The bending of sports equipment has a close relationship with the practice of inventing new sports , a practice that has been used quite widely in artistic adaptations of sport as well as outside art. Hungarian artist Antal Lakner makes the arbitrary nature of sport visible by turning mundane physical work into exercises, for instance the practical tasks of painting walls and pushing wheelbarrows have been remodeled into exercises

444 Culture Jamming - Media Actionism In The 21st Century website: "Interview of Eva and Franco Mattes aka 01.org," http://www.culture-jamming.de/interviewIIe.html, accessed 4.9.2013.

445 Centre national des arts plastiques website, Domaine départemental de Chamarande: "Sportivement vôtre," http://www.cnap.fr/sportivement-votre,accessed 9.9.2013. Exporevue website: "L'art et le sport, un dimanche à Chamarande,“ http://www.exporevue.com/magazine/fr/chamarande_sport.html, accessed 9.9.2013.

446 Westphal 2004.





that are performed in specially built machines.[447] The arbitrary nature of sport events and their rules is utilized elsewhere as well: the Swedish cultural journal *Glänta* published a special issue about sport in 2009. In addition to dealing with the cultural aspects of traditional (American football, golf, boxing, shack, tennis, for example) and contemporary sports (bouldering, kite surfing, parkour, skateboarding), a few authors were asked to invent new sports. The results were varied, often poetic, sometimes extremely difficult to realize or even harmful to the participant's health, but also the result of a well-balanced reflection about the requirements of a new sport and the qualities needed for its success.

*Briljard,* a mash-up of billiards and briljera (in Swedish to shine, to show off) is an extremely complex verbal game that requires a deep understanding of cultural history and trends as well as brilliant verbal skills.[448] *Rüggböj* is probably the most harmful sport ever invented; the idea is to lift objects using your back in order to reach the objective of the sport – backache.[449] On the other hand, *Stegring* sounds like a possible competitive sport; the participants are competing against each other in a regular running track. However, not in trying to run as fast as possible, but in accelerating their speed for as long a time as possible. The sport requires physical strength, one must be a good runner and also have the somaesthetic sensitivity to feel the slight changes in speed and acceleration. It is a concept that could be easily accepted, as there are many aspects that are familiar from already existing sports, but the sport also requires a new kind of skill that has never before existed in sport.[450]

Usually, the invented sports remain as suggestions or have limited usage, like the events in *International King of Sports*[451], but there is one that has developed from an imaginary setting to a real sport. Chess boxing made its first appearance in a south London boxing club in the late 1970s, but became known worldwide since appearing in the comic book *Froid Équateur* by French artist Enki Bilal in 1992. It is a hybrid sport, combining chess and boxing in alternating rounds. The first real life chess boxing event was organized in artistic settings by Dutch artist Iepe Rubingh in 2003. The game has enjoyed a growing popularity, and events have been organized in various places around the world. Today, chess boxing has a proper organization and also a world championship event, first organized in 2003.[452]

The previous examples of bending sport in the name of art (and entertainment) have been somewhat simple, and have hardly reached more than the surface of sport practice. However, seeing the humorous connotations of sport and at the same time revealing more about

447 Drühl 2004, 75-77.

448 M.A.T. 2009, 50-51.

449 Rinne 2009, 47-48.

450 Halberg 2009, 53-56.

451 "International King of Sports" was a yearly multi-sport competition produced by TV-company Endemol. Smith 2004. White 2004.

452 World Chessboxing Association website: "FAQ," http://worldchessboxing.com/contact/wcba-chessboxing-faq/, accessed 22.4.2014. Ellwood 2013.

the relations between art and sport is possible. Florian Slotawa constructed a thought-provoking combination of art and sport in his series of runs through nine German museums[453]. Slotawa's project involved running the shortest route through museum collections as fast as possible, and documenting the runs in an authentic sport broadcast manner. The task was taken seriously: in order to achieve the best possible results, Slotawa went through a training program before performing the runs. The result of the project was presented in the form of documentary videos, where all the runs were edited to resemble a regular sport broadcast: several cameras had been placed along the routes to follow Slotawa's sprint, and a digital stop watch displayed the elapsed time in the lower corner of the screen. In addition to bringing a sport event out of its normal settings, Slotawa's work questions the customary habit of hurrying through exhibitions – catching a glimpse of everything and seeing nothing properly.[454]

453 Florian Slotawa: *Museum Sprints* 2000-2001. The work included following runs: -Kunsthalle Mannheim (time 1.07.49 minutes), Museum Friedricianum, Kassel (1:02.07 minutes), Kunstsammlung NRW, Düsseldorf (0:45.13 minutes), Hamburger Kunsthalle (1:46.48 minutes), Lenbachhaus, München (1:16.82 minutes), Alte Pinakothek, München (1:13.26 minutes), Diözesanmuseum Freising (1:20.77minutes), MMK, Frankfurt (1:18.52 minutes), Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach (1:15.67 minutes).

454 Jari-Pekka Vanhala, email message to author 5.2.2008. Drühl 2004 , 68-71.

### *For External Purposes*

Sometimes sport is used in art for references to issues outside sport practice; sport is employed to make other topics visible. The practice is somewhat related to "bending" sport, but sport practice or equipment is not at the center of the works. Sport provides a contrasting setting for the main subject, which quite often seems to be a political one.

Sebastián Errázuriz's project *The Tree* (2006) consisted of planting a 10 meter high magnolia tree in the middle of the national stadium in Santiago. The tree was planted in the stadium because it had served as a prison during the coup of dictator Augusto Pinochet in 1973. Thousands of political prisoners were imprisoned, tortured, and killed in the stadium. For most of the one week period the stadium was empty and open to the public, but at the end of the project a football match was played in front of 20 000 people while the tree was still in place.[455]

Humberto Vélez's usage of sport in the context of art resembles a gesture; his works do not adapt a sport in order to turn it into art, sport is just a part of the event. His project *La pelea* (The Fight) (2007) brought amateur boxing into TATE Modern as a component of an event that combined displays of boxing skills, music, and a street dance choreography. *Le Plongeon* (The Dive) (2010), organized in Paris for the Pompidou Centre, was a similar combination of sport,

455 Sebastián Errázuriz's internet pages: *The Tree Memorial of a Concentration Camp*, http://www.meetsebastian.com/78905/710850/public-art/tree, accessed 10.9.2013. Ashdown 2010.



music, and street dance – this time the sports were drawn from various watersports (swimming, synchronized swimming, diving, and water polo) instead of boxing. Although sport and its aesthetics were central in Vélez's works, presenting it was not the central objective, but rather to use the spectacle of sport to draw attention to social issues; in the case of The Fight the target was the gap between the high culture presented in TATE Modern and the poor conditions of the young people in the nearby areas, and in the case of Le Plongeon to illuminate the young people's culture in Paris. In his combinations of art and sport, Veléz promotes a holistic view of the possibilities of sport in contemporary art, if one turns to look for them outside of the European tradition.[456]

Per Hüttner's *Jogging in Exotic Cities* (1999-2003) was a photographic project in which the artist has been photographed in various exotic cities wearing a clean white outfit. The cities Hüttner has been running in are not places where exercising on the streets is a common sight. The white-clad runner stands out from the normal traffic on the streets like an exclamation mark, clearly showing that western (body)culture is not the norm everywhere. The runner himself is transformed into an exotic sight by breaking the local code of clothing and behavior.[457]

456 Humberto Vélez's website: *La Pelea*, http://humbertovelez.com/projects/london/. *Le Plongeon*, http://humbertovelez.com/projects/paris/, accessed 9.9.2013.

457 Per Hüttner's website: *Jogging in Exotic Cities*, http://www.perhuttner.com/projects/jogging-in-exotic-cities/, accessed 18.9.2013.

### *As a Medium of Making Art*

In addition to the previous approaches to combining art and sport, contemporary artists use a sport practice as a personal medium for making art. In this approach, sport is not examined from the outside, and its cultural role does not have to be emphasized, especially when it is used to create an artwork. The artist is usually the active participant in the sport; the activity is experienced by the artist himself. Doing sport for art detaches the artwork from presenting sport or using sport in making art – sport is no longer the subject of art but the means for making art. Sport becomes an integral part of the artwork, however it is not necessarily visible in the finished work. The sport activity can be done either as a live performance, or it can be recorded using various methods and presented as documentation. The spectators can also participate in the physical action, either individually or together with the artist. From the perspective of my research, using sport as a medium for artistic work is the most fruitful approach to combining art and sport.

The first specimens of artworks where physical sport-like action was used for making art can be found in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when conceptual artists experimented with diverse ways of documenting an activity in order to turn it into art. A common approach was to undertake a seemingly meaningless task and record the results of it. However, the presented documentation of the results was not the central aspect of the work; the novel idea was to draw attention to

the physical practice used for making art, literally turning the artistic work into artworks.[458] An early example of this approach is Richard Long's *A Line Made by Walking* (1967), which connects physical action and the mark it makes on the earth. Although Long's walking is not exactly sport, his compulsive act of walking back and forth on grass is close to the regulated forms of physical activity.[459] Another pioneer in combining physical exertion with art was Vito Acconci, whose *Step Piece* (1970) combined a performative act and its documentation in a similar manner to Long's *Line*, but Acconci's work draws closer to sport both in the form of the action and the method of primary documentation. The performative action in the artwork was Acconci's daily task of stepping on and off a stool at the rate of thirty steps per minute, continuing the workout as long as possible. Unlike Long's walking, which was a private activity, Acconci's *Step Piece* was open to public view – in his kitchen. The work was documented by photographic samples of the action and, more importantly, keeping an account of the progress made over the period that the action was performed.[460] Tehching (Sam) Hsieh's various one year long performances between 1978 and 1986 brought the personal commitment to physical – and mental – exertion to the extreme. Each of his "pieces" consisted of living one year under extremely tight regulations: for instance being confined in a wooden cage and not talking, reading, writing, listening to the radio, or watching television (*Cage Piece*, 1978-1979), punching a time clock every hour (*Time Clock Piece*, 1980-1981), or not entering any building or shelter (*Outdoor Piece*, 1981-1982).[461] A common feature shared by many of the early artworks experimenting with the connection between physical actions and art is their concentration on endurance and the absence of enjoyment in the physical effort.

Non-functional tasks or physical experiences have also been provided for the audience. *Bodyspacemotionthings* (1971) was an installation by Robert Morris that consisted of various wooden structures that were meant for climbing, swinging, sliding and crawling over, under, and through. During its time it was considered as the first truly physically interactive art exhibition. The exhibition in Tate Gallery was received with great enthusiasm, so great that it was closed just four days after the opening.[462]

Many of the contemporary artistic approaches to combining art and physical actions continue the performative tradition from the 1960s, but today there is a wider variation of applications, including those employing a specific sport practice. The mood of the contemporary artworks also has a wider tonal range than the pioneering works; utter seriousness is not the only possible attitude. Even if the work addresses serious issues, there can be playful elements, spectacle, and humor.

Several artworks falling into this category have been presented in this and earlier chapters. For instance, Florian Slotawa's *Museum Sprints,* as well as Per Hüttner's *Jogging in Exotic Cities,* transform a sport practice into a personal medium of making art, even though the images of the sport action form a central part of the work. *It takes 154,000 breaths to evacuate Boston* (2007-2008), by kanarinka, uses sport in a more detached manner; the only part of the actual running that is present in the work is her breathing during the runs. The artist considered the runs as a series of performances in public space, but the main documentation of the work is the sound. However, realizing the work required the artist to run all of the evacuation routes in Boston.[463]

Various works in this category call for spectator participation. This participation can take place during the preparatory work, with the result of the participation being presented later, or the participation can create the artwork, or it can be required in order to properly experience the work.

*Test Site* by Carsten Höller, exhibited at Tate Modern, brought the spectator's physical experience to the center of the artwork in a similar manner to Robert Morris's *Bodyspacemotionthings*. Höller's *Test Site* (2006) consisted of two huge tubular slides that wound down several floors in the Turbine Gallery of Tate Modern. The audience could slide down the tubes, suspended in mid-air, through the five-stories tall foyer. People entered the slides on the third and fifth floors, and ended their journey at the ground floor. Although the sculptural object the slides formed in the hall was important itself, the artist's central interest was in creating a special experience while sliding down. In Höller's own words: "The state of mind that you enter when sliding, of simultaneous delight, madness and 'voluptuous panic', can't simply disappear without trace afterwards."[464] Although Höller's *Test Site* puts the emphasis on physical experience, it stays quite far from dealing with physical activity, because sliding down the tubular slides does not require a real effort.

The interactive installation *Run Motherfucker Run* (2001/2004) by Marnix de Nijs prepared a platform for the spectator's physical activity and curiosity. In the installation, the spectators could one by one step on a giant treadmill that interacts with the video screen in the front. The pace of running affects the speed of one's progression through the world in the video, as well as the brightness of the screen. If there is nobody running, there is nothing to see. However, the navigation through the nocturnal city is not controlled by the runner. The runner's movement affects the navigation, but the

458 Moleswort 2003, 101.

459 Richard Long Official Website: *A Line Made by Walking*, http://www.richardlong.org/Sculptures/2011sculptures/linewalking.html, accessed 22.4.2014

460 Molesworth 2003 b, 106-108. Also Hopkins 2000, 192.

461 Tehching Hsieh's website, http://tehchinghsieh.com/, accessed 28.11.2013. Bryan-Wilson 2003, 142-143.

462 Tate Gallery website: *Bodyspacemotionthings*, http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/robert-morris-bodyspacemotion-things, accessed 16.9.2013

463 kanarinka's internet pages, *It takes 154,000 breaths to evacuate Boston*, http://www.ikatun.org/kanarinka/it-takes-154000-breaths-to-evacuate-boston/, accessed 16.9.3013.

464 Honoré 2006.

activity gives no real control over it.[465]

*Forest Pitch* (2012)[466] by Greg Coulthart employed all three methods of audience participation. Schoolchildren designed the team's outfits, and the teams of volunteers trained together before their matches. Both the teams and the participating spectators created the performative part of the artwork, and experiencing *Forest Pitch* would have been incomplete if the audience would have behaved like they were in an art museum, and not participated in the work as real spectators at a football game. Coulthart's *Forest Pitch* thus puts the audience in the middle of the work. The artist works as a director and organizer, who prepares the circumstances for the action to take place. The actual narrative takes place in the given circumstances, but it is not completely defined in advance. Coulthart's project provides only a starting point for the happening.

465 Marnix de Nijs's internet pages: *Run Motherfucker Run*, http://www.marnixdenijs.nl/run-motherfucker-run.htm, accessed 16.9.2013.

466 Forest Pitch internet pages: *Forest Pitch*, http://forestpitch.org/.

# The Broad Field of Artistic Opportunities

The preceding account of diverse approaches to sport by other contemporary artists makes it clear that the interest in sport within the artworld has been around for some time, and that the methods of combining sport and art have developed further since the heroic statues of early twentieth century modernism. As an artist, I have found it illuminating to study other artist's solutions to combining art and sport. Despite that focusing on sport is a fairly rare tendency in art, the variety of artworks that have some kind of relation to sport has been surprisingly great. When I made my first investigations into possible artworks in this genre, I found mostly kitschy statues and paintings presenting athletes, and only a few artworks, exhibitions, and projects where a more thoughtful approach was visible. Fortunately, my first impression of the artworks employing sport was utterly unrepresentative, and I have been able to find a good collection of works and projects that connect art with sport and other physical exertions in various ways. The general taxonomy of the approaches used by other artists and myself has broadened my perspective during the course of the research, as I have found artists dealing with sport and other physical tasks, and especially with the incorporation of personal experience.

My art projects suggest connections to several of the approaches presented, however I feel the closest affinity to the approach of using sport as a tool for making art. The main reason for this is my own relationship with contemporary art practice – I have tried to find artistic modes of working that would expose the new aspects of today's sport, and I have chosen the tools – artistic mediums – that I have considered the most appropriate ones for the task. The themes of my art projects, and for the most part the direction of my research, have caused me to play with sport in a certain manner: to present sports using the means of art, looking for novel perspectives on sport, or making a homage to a famous athlete, but also for those ordinary men and women who engage in sport at their leisure. I have pursued a relevant way to use sport in the making of my art – and at least partially succeeded.

Even though many of the contemporary artists presented in this chapter have been employing sport in their art in a similar manner as I have done, I think that my first-hand work with the art projects has brought a new perspective to the research as a whole. Using other artists' work as examples would not have provided a similar understanding of the relationship between art and sport. In addition, my concentration on distance running has made it possible to explore the general features of today's sport more deeply than could have been done by an external study of diverse artworks about a variety of sports. Through the artistic projects, I have been able to focus on the questions I have found interesting at the time. My acquaintance with the special combination of art and sport has gone further than most artists, because of my constant work with the subject for several years.

My explorations within art and sport have been developing in unison. While my comprehension of the recent developments in sport has been growing, I have learned to look for new kind of approaches towards sport in art. The result has been a wider perspective, wherein the original idea of modern sport has expanded into a broad concept where the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles is more determining than the limits of certain sports, and analogously the diversity of art dealing with sport and physical activities has multiplied.

My own artistic projects dealing with sport, together with the works of other contemporary artists presented in this chapter, demonstrate that there exists a link between contemporary visual arts and sport – and if the recent transformations in the aesthetic views of sport, as well as the artification processes in sport, are taken into account, the contact surface between art and sport has only been growing wider over the last decades thus making the link between art and sport firmer than before.



# 10 • The Contemporary Cultures in Art and Sport



Before the systems of art and sport practices reached their current state, they still had to go through a number of transformations from the matured modern state they reached in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Both practices had reached the condition and organization familiar to us during the first decades of the twentieth century. The common, everyday conception of art, artworks, artists, and their working methods, as well as the notion of sport in general, sport events, and athletes still comes down to us from those days. This common conception is still prevailing, however, a closer look reveals that both art and sport have changed significantly during the second half of the twentieth century, and the transformation of the practices has continued in the early twenty-first century – probably at an accelerated pace. The contemporary practices of art and sport differ from their modernist variants as well as from their original models. Some of the changes affect only either art or sport, but there are shifts that affect both. The latter ones are those which can be seen to be bringing art and sport closer to each other.

# The Expanding Fields

The first break with the modern system of art happened already during the 1910s, and since the Second World War the departures from tradition have become more frequent, but the decisive turning point in art practice can be situated in the 1960s. In a few years' time, a significant portion of new art made a departure from the previous modernist tradition and started a development that led to the current understanding of contemporary art.[467] These changes in art took place within various art movements and under various titles, but they all shared some key aspects that reveal the fracture between modernist artistic practice and the ensuing, novel practice: art transformed from the inward looking mindset of late modernism to a communicative practice. Instead of reflecting the characteristics of an artwork's medium, the new works of art took a stance in observing, questioning, and communicating with the world. As a consequence of this development, the traditional confines established by the mediums of art began to disappear. While the apex of late modern art had been abstract painting, more varying approaches to making art now emerged and became a frequent practice. The objectives of modernism that Clement Greenberg had outlined during its last decades were not valid anymore at the beginning of the 1960s.[468] While modernism had encouraged a consistent idea of art, the new art emerged on several fronts and within various new art forms and their combinations, often challenging the limits of art. Pluralism, which was later defined as one of the central features of the postmodern, became the connective feature of art. Both artworks and artistic labor had changed for good.[469]

The development away from the modernist tradition is best visible in the emergence and advance of the new mediums and materials of art, but this is a rather superficial change. More fundamental is the shift that has taken place in the artistic work process, the physical artwork. While the modern system of art emphasized the physical outcome of artistic work, the new art emerging during the 1960s brought the process to the fore, either in a weak form, as background information on the artwork, or strongly underlining it, by presenting the process or the documentation themselves as the artwork. While focusing on the process formed the central element of the move away from the modern conception of art, other features were significant too. The new art sought methods for lowering the borderline between art and the everyday: the border was crossed by using everyday materials for making artworks, or even *as* artworks as such, as well as bringing art out of its dedicated spaces.[470] The third important feature of art's shift was the participatory approach, the attempt to bring the spectators into physical interaction with the artwork, and later to even participate in the making of the work. As all of these transformations combined, the consequence was that the conceptions of art, and the role of art as well as artist, were significantly different at the end of the 1960s than they were ten years earlier. Art practice had transformed from a traditional artist's *craft* to producing aesthetic experiences.[471]

In the context of bridging the practices of art and sport, an important trend was the move from making objects to making actions. As artists were already looking into the artistic process rather than the results of the traditional artistic mediums of painting, sculpting or drawing, they had turned themselves into organizers and producers of experiences. When turning art work into an action, an artist's work consists of giving oneself a task, completing it, and documenting the process, or alternatively preparing an assignment for others, usually the audience, to fulfill – and consequently to finish the artwork. If manual work was needed, it would not be skilled craft like traditional artistic work, but basic manual or physical tasks turned into futile activity, like stepping up and down on a stool in Vito Acconci's *Step Piece*.[472]

Another important shift in art practice was the narrowing of the gap between art and the everyday. This took place both in the material and technical choices of the artworks, as well as the practice of artistic work. The changes in materials and mediums had already remodeled art in the 1960s; Andy Warhol's thoroughly analyzed *Brillo Boxes* can be seen as a landmark of this tendency. *Brillo Boxes* simulated the commercial packages so closely that it was hard to tell the difference through visual inspection alone, although something, at least in the manner of the presentation, set the artwork apart from the everyday object.[473]

The borders between art and the everyday have faded even more since Warhol's work, as the importance of the art object has diminished and artistic activity has taken more immaterial forms. According to Lucy R. Lippard's account, artworks had already turned to immaterial forms during the late 1960s.[474] Today, the most significant difference between an artwork and everyday things can be found in the artist's intention and the institutional setting of the activity. Distinguishing the difference becomes more confusing or even irrelevant when the artwork functions partially in the field of some other practice. For instance, the Danish group *Superflex* has carried out a project called *Supergas*, a biogas unit, which employs locally produced organic materials for producing gas for cooking and lightening, thus reducing the need for firewood. The project was presented in an art related context, but also functions as a prototype for a project helping developing countries struggling with

467 Shiner 2001, 291. Also Lippard 1997 (1973).

468 Greenberg 2005 a (1940). Greenberg 2005 b (1960). Danto 1997, 92-93.

469 Lippard 1997 (1973).

470 Hopkins 2000, 172-173. Kwon 2004, 13-18.

471 Molesworth 2003 a, 28-31. Lippard 1997 (1973).

472 Molesworth 2003 a, 39-43.

473 Danto 1964, 580-581.

474 Lippard 1997 (1973).

energy problems.[475]

The third shift in art practice that I would like to emphasize is the emerging communal and processual nature of many contemporary art practices. Asking the spectators to interact physically with the artwork already shares the completion of the artwork that is initially set up by the artist. *Bodyspacemotionthings* by Robert Morris is an early example of this approach. However, it is still the artist who makes the proposal for the activity and outlines the limits of where the activity takes place. The limits can be strict, when a participating member of the audience must follow the artist's instructions, or the situation can be open, when the audience is allowed to play rather freely within the setting.

A good example of the first situation is Erwin Wurm's series *One Minute Sculptures,* where the artist gives drawn instructions about how to perform a simple action with everyday objects,[476] and of the latter Anthony Gormley's project *Clay and the Collective Body* at the 2009 Ihme Contemporary Art Festival, where he invited people to make something from clay.[477] While Wurm's project requires the participants to follow his instructions in order to achieve a predefined setup, Gormley's project allows the participants to make whatever they like, and the process of making surpasses the need for an obvious result.

Today's communal practices can take the action of involving audience even further. Artists like Lea and Pekka Kantonen work together with various communities in order to enhance their lives. Their work with the community does not have to produce anything artistic, there is no performance, however the process is documented and presented in an art context. The work of art takes the form of a "constructed situation".[478] With this kind of working method it is hard to see the art in the traditional sense, because there is no particular art object and the process does not remind one of traditional artistic processes.[479]

In the new collaborative art practices, the artist acts as a catalyst: her objective is to facilitate in creating situations that allow processes to take place. The work is often motivated by an activist attitude, and the situations and processes generated are socially engaged, aimed to promote a change in the participants' real-life circumstances.  However, the destination of the processes is often vague, and the situations usually remain open-ended: there is no predefined objective that the participants should strive for, there is just the process and its final incompleteness.[480]

The outset of the recent transformation of sport can be located roughly at the same time as the change in art. However, the change in sport took more time than in art. The sport system had been subject to some changes since the Second World War, but these changes have taken place within the prevailing system of achievement sport. The main changes in sport before the end of the 1960s had been the globalization and politicization of the sport system. While modern sport had been a predominantly western practice during the first half of the century, now it began to spread to all the other parts of the world as well. This development can be easily seen by looking at the countries attending the summer Olympics. The pre-World War II Olympic Games were attended mainly by countries from Europe and North and South America, but after the war the Asian and African nations joined the Olympic Family. The Soviet Union joined the Olympic countries in the 1952 Helsinki Olympic Games. Politics had entered sports already at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, but during the second half of the century political tension as well as various political acts became a regular part of the games.

The actual beginning of the change in sport takes place in the late 1960s and early 70s, when new practices emerged parallel to the dominant ideas of achievement and regulated competition. Moreover, new attitudes towards traditional competitive sports, like jogging for exercise instead running in competitions, expanded the idea of sport. Completely new physical activities that emphasized the experience over competitive attitude, like *new games*[481] and skateboarding, surfaced to the common awareness. While jogging could still be counted as a sport, the new physical activities emerged from play, and challenged many ideals of modern sport. Actions that were earlier considered just children's play and fooling around with diverse gadgets were transformed into more serious physical activities. A good and well documented example is the development of skateboarding. The development of skateboarding practice is inseparable from the technological progress of the equipment: the contemporary skateboard descends from children's scooters that were used for playing outside; usually for taking short rides on the sidewalks and streets. Various technical elements in the skateboard developed until, in the early 1970s, the board was equipped with polyurethane wheels and mechanically adequate trucks, which made it possible for the practice to grow into its current widespread and culturally multifaceted form.[482]

Another more didactic approach to physical activity, which also grew from play, was the movement that promoted the so-called *new games*. The idea of new games was to offer a counterpoise to the competitive ideals of sport. Instead of playing and competing against each other, the participants would play together still utilizing skills used in modern sport.[483] Neither jogging, skateboarding, or new games broke with the existing system of sport in a similar way as happened in art. Instead, they extended the notion of

475 Superflex's website: *Supergas* 1996-, http://superflex.net/tools/supergas, accessed 6.12.2013 and Supergas website, http://www.supergas.dk/, accessed 6.12.2013.

476 GalleryXavier Hufkens's website: "Erwin Wurm," http://www.xavierhufkens.com/artists/erwin-wurm, accessed 2.10.2013, Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art website, Blog: "Become a Sculpture," http://blog.qag.qld.gov.au/become-a-sculpture/, accessed 2.10. 2013.

477 Taidesäätiö Pro Arte 2009.

478 Bourriaud 2002, 85.

479 Kantonen 1999, chapter 4.

480 Kester 1999, 19-20. Haapalainen 2006, 163-164.

481 Turner 2006.

482 Borden 2001, 14-18.

483 Turner 2006. Pearce et. al. 2007, 262.

modern physical culture by doing it from inside sport (jogging) as well as outside it (skateboarding and new games).

Simultaneous with the emergence of these new physical activities, competitive modern sport also began to transform. Over a few decades, it developed from a display of nations to a part of the global entertainment industry.[484] While there have been professional sports since the introduction of modern sport, it had been shut out from central international events, most importantly the Olympic Games. Now the idea of amateurism began to break down, and sport started to change into a professional activity.[485] The transformation of sport continued until the early 1990s, when the acceptance of professional athletes into the Olympic Games finally ended the period of modern sport. Today, the Olympic Games are a carefully protected trademark with great global value rather than an idealistic movement.

Today it can be said that we have entered the post-sport era; even though modern sport is still an influential practice, a new layer of physical activities that do not totally conform to the ideas of sport has emerged. These new physical practices require athletic skills, but are less oriented towards regulated competitions. For the majority of the participants, they form a lifestyle that penetrates into other cultural practices outside the physical one. An important part of these practices is the play element, which is apparent when the activities are compared with the modern sport. Much of the activity is playing around, not obvious exercising as in sport. The hobbyist adaptations of popular modern sports have adopted the playful and experience seeking attitude from the novel post-sport physical practices. In addition, traditional non-European body cultures are adopted as part of current physical practices; the popularity of yoga today shows how perennial practices can be adapted as part of mainstream physical culture, and even developed further within it. A distinct feature of the post-sport stage is practicing a wide variety of physical activities as an internal part of everyday life, not a separated segment like modern sport.[486] Now the physical activity that one is engaged in shows in ones preferences in music, clothing, nutrition etc. Watching sport is still a popular pastime, but it is now also an indispensable part of the entertainment industry. Altogether, the hegemony of modern sport is beginning to come to an end, and the landscape of contemporary physical cultures is as frayed as that of contemporary art.

Sport is no longer an attractive category for all physical practices. There has been a tendency to define new physical practices as being outside sport, or as alternatives to sport, though "sport" is often still visible in the terms used: post-sports, unofficial sports, extreme sports, alternative sports, lifestyle sports, new sports, or new games all define their position in a relation to sport. Including "sport" in the names of the practices illustrates certain values, because practices like yoga, capoeira, or parkour refrain

484 Kellner 2003, 69.

485 Eichberg 1995 a, 5.

486 Hänninen 2004, 76-77, 83. Dickey 1999.





using sport when defining the characteristics of the practice. On the other hand, in the field of contemporary sport there is an inclination to appropriate all kinds of physical activities as sports. Outside traditional sport, there is both resistance to this conversion to sport (sportification), and a certain appeal to turning the practice into a "real sport". The contradictory views in defining sport or in taking a stance in relation to sport make the current boundary between sport and other physical practices unclear.[487]

The development towards a plurality in sport is similar to that in the arts. Today, there are various ways to engage in physical activity. Some of the contemporary modes of physical activity are clear descendants of modern sport, while others promote new perspectives on physical culture and exercise. The first physical activities with objectives different from the modern conception of sport were established in the early 1970s, at the latest. During the 1980s, an attempt to make a radical change in physical culture took place by a movement promoting new games that stood for a softer, less competitive attitude towards physical activity. These new games brought play to the center of physical activity, in place of achievement and winning as in modern sport. The new games movement never became a great success, and faded away by the end of the 1980s, but the spirit is visible in many sports under the current label post-sports or alternative sports. These contemporary physical cultures have emerged in the mainstream awareness over the past few decades, and are often labeled as lifestyle sports. The approach to physical activity in alternative sports differs from modern sports: the important aspects separating them from modern sport are the sub-cultural identity, the emphasis on "grass roots" participation, the consumption of new objects, a participatory ideology where fun, hedonism, and involvement are important, and an individualistic attitude.[488]

The difference from modern sport focuses on a couple of developing trends: the division between the participants and the spectators has become blurred, and the experiential dimension is emphasized. Being involved in a practice together with other enthusiasts generates a sub-cultural identity, especially when the practice is conceived of as dangerous, or at least reckless, by the general public. The new equipment allows a new kind of connection with the environment and novel expressions of individuality.[489] The dimension of fun and hedonism in alternative sports can be found in condensed form in a statement by Karina Hollekim, a professional BASE jumper, who describes her passion to parachute off ledges as a call for twenty seconds of joy.[490]

The nature of alternative sports is for the most part non-aggressive and playful. The social element of the activity is important: even in the competitive forms of alternative sports, meeting the other participants is as substantial a part of

487 Wheaton 2004, 12-14.

488 Wheaton 2004, 12-13.

489 Hänninen 2004, 77.

490 Hoffmann 2007.

the practice as the competition.[491] The relationship with the environment is also dissimilar from modern sport: the "spaces of consumption" in alternative sports differs from the clearly defined spaces in modern sport. While modern sport spaces are confined by the predetermined limits defined by the rules, the preferred spaces for alternative sports are usually suitable, but not specially planned, outdoor spaces.[492] In addition to the distant areas or wilderness in which alternative sports are practiced, their use of public areas in cities redefines the use of urban space. For instance, a skateboarder looks at the stairs, fences, and benches in a different manner than the city planner or common pedestrian. According to Borden, all structures are seen as possibilities for a new trick, and chances to experience the environment from a novel angle. The practice of post-sport physical cultures seeks to define their space according to the participant's interests; there is no one space that is correct, but various spaces that can bring something new to the practice at the moment.[493]

Even though the new physical practices provided an alternative to modern sport, they exist under the influence of sport and have adopted various features of sport. The degree of the effect varies; some practices had become totally sportified, transformed into a sport, while others have stayed clearly outside the confines of sport, while a third group have stayed in the middle ground. The development of three popular practices, presented below, provides a great example of the relationship between alternative and modern sports.

Modern snowboarding developed during the 1960s, emerged into mainstream knowledge in the 1980s, was adopted from the International Snowboard Federation (founded 1990) under the auspices of the International Ski Federation in 1994, and finally accepted to the Nagano 1998 Winter Olympics.[494] In less than decade snowboarding has transformed from an alternative activity to an internationally acknowledged sport. Skateboarding became mainstream as a competitive practice slightly earlier, during the 1960s, and enjoyed growing popularity from the 1970s. Competitive skateboarding has flourished all that time outside the official sport world, under various organizations.[495] Even though there were negotiations about including skateboarding in the Olympic program in the London 2012 Olympics, it is not yet considered as an official sport. The third practice, parkour, was developed in the late 1980s by David Belle and Sébastien Foucan. The practice of parkour is related to gymnastics and French military training, however it shows similar experimental relationship with the environment as are present in skateboarding and snowboarding; the practitioners are always looking for new ways to connect with their physical environment. Unlike the other two practices, parkour has always stayed clear of competitive activity. Utilizing specially constructed training areas and obstacle courses has moved the parkour slightly toward sport, or sportified it, but it is still furthest from sport of these three practices.[496] Sometimes the relationship to sport varies depending on the context: for instance, snowboarding in the Olympic Games and the World Championship Games is definitely a sport, but the same tricks performed on concrete structures in suburban Helsinki steps outside the modern conception of sport.

The development of sport towards a postmodern state incorporates one aspect that differs entirely form art. The status of amateurism in sport changed totally in the early 1990s, when professional athletes were allowed to participate in the Olympic Games. Since the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, elite sports have become a thoroughly professional enterprise. In some sports (for instance, boxing, football, ice hockey, and baseball) there had been professional leagues for long time, and in some countries the top athletes have been employed by the state, i.e. paid for training and international sport success. However, the general principle was to separate the real athletes, the amateurs, from the professionals. After that constraint was removed, sport ceased to be pastime practice, where the reward was merely honor: it turned into a profession with the potential for great financial benefits. However, professional athletes can also be sold and bought like any merchandise.

In parallel to the shift in the athlete's status from amateur to professional, sport itself also changed, and became a part of the entertainment industry. In the service of the entertainment industry, the professional athlete has to entertain in order to earn money. This change favors events that create a spectacle and draw a large audience. While the amateur had been the archetypal athlete since the nineteenth century, at the turn of the millennium the greatest hero was the best-paid sportsman. In today's elite sports the achievement is twofold; there is the sport achievement and the financial one – and both are valued alike. Today's media reports in a similar way about the sport records and the record incomes of the athletes.[497]

491 Klockars 2010.

492 Wheaton 2004, 12.

493 Borden 2001, 232-233. Eichberg 1998, 145-146.

494 "Snowboard Equipment and History," Olympic.org, Official Website of the Olympic Movement, http://www.olympic.org/snowboard-equipment-and-history?tab=history, accessed 22.4.2014. FIS/International Ski Federation website: "Snowboard, World Cup History," http://www.fis-ski.com/snowboard/extra/worldcup-history.html, accessed 3.12.2013.

495 In 2013 there are four organizations representing skateboarding as a sport: the International Skateboarding Federation (ISF), the International Association of Skateboard Companies (IASC), the International Federation of Roller Sports (FIRS), and the International Cycling Union (UCI). Xgames website, http://xgames.espn.go.com/skateboarding/article/8253956/skateboarding-unlikely-become-olympic-sport, accessed 3.12.2013.

496 Parkour International website: "Définition du Parkour," http://www.parkourinternational.org/le-parkour/definition-du-parkour/, accessed 22.4.2014. Parkour facilities at Tapahtumapuisto, Jyväskylä, Finland, http://www.jyvaskyla.fi/puistot/parkour, accessed 3.12.2013.

497 Andrews 2006, 95-98. Kellner 2003, 70.

# Experiences and Processes

All of the shifts in art practice that occurred during recent decades are linked, only the ratio of the components in the instances of art varies; emphasizing the processes often takes art closer to the artist's personal everyday, and the processes that reach out for interaction are again entangled with the everyday of other people. The community and interactive art is constructed around the processes, and the finished outcome is often secondary to the experience of working together. Collectively, these changes in art practice have lowered the border between art and the other parts of today's culture. Furthermore, the line between art and other parts of culture is becoming more and more blurred: where before there was a border that was hard to cross, there is now a broader field where experimental new practices arise.[498]

It is not only art practice that has been active at the borderline; Pauline von Bonsdorff describes various practices in contemporary culture that use art-like strategies and draw themselves closer to art – become artified – even though they are not (yet) crossing the border of art. For instance, various communal activities focus on processes similar to community art, while not attempting to become art proper. These include various approaches to health care, social work, and art education, as well as business. These approaches pursue different objectives, but they share the use of art or art-like elements in promoting their ends.[499] The use of art-related practices in the context of health care has particularly been seen as a fruitful combination. For instance, the Finnish Cultural Foundation, one of the main patrons of art, has recently provided special grants for artistic work within the health care system.[500]

While the use art as a means to an end outside the art practice is already an established practice in institutionalized settings, recently practices that use similar methods have also emerged outside regular institutions. Different free-form practices and events, which combine communal working methods and a creative attitude, might promote a variety of ends, however they all share the idea of working together in a creative manner in order to benefit the everyday lives of a larger group of people. These activities can have clearly articulated artified features, though they are not necessary a conscious part of the practice: the participants might not connect the activity to anything artistic, but for an external perceiver the creative and artistic attitude is clearly visible.[501]

One feature that connects most free-form communal activities is their *rhizomatic* structure.[502] Maria Daskalaki and Oli Mould see that the new urban and unorganized activities form a rhizome, where no center can be detected. These *urban social formations* deviate from traditional subcultures in their state of flux, where new kinds of connections, experimentation, and engagement in activity can take place. Organized groups can exist that represent a certain activity, but the activity is not identified with that group. Instead of solidifying into a discernible subculture, the new urban social formations remain as open areas for collaboration. This new kind of organization is visible in various contemporary practices, from graffiti to parkour and flash-mobbing.[503]

The amount of these activities has been growing rapidly during the last couple of years. Their rise is largely a consequence of social media on the internet: new and interesting practices spread at an enormous speed on Facebook and similar websites, and improvements to existing ones are shared through the same channels. Although the major events usually have a named organizer, there is a great difference between artified methods used in an institutional setting and these free-form approaches: the free-form practices are open and scalable – they can be initiated nearly anywhere and their ideas can be adapted according to local circumstances.

For example, the *maker movement* has existed for some time. It gathers together numerous DIY-activities that focus on developing and making all kinds of apparatus and other creations. Some of the projects are useful, while others are made for fun, and the level of the projects range from everyday skills to one's needing expertise, complex equipment, and a deep knowledge of technology. Many of the projects within the maker movement include modern technology, writing code, and building electronic devices, but projects that include baking and home improvements also exist. The main objective of the movement is to show that anybody can improve their daily environment by getting their hands dirty. Much of the activity is on the internet, but temporary fairs and permanent hackerspaces form venues for live meetings.[504]

*Koulu* (School) is a peer-learning event or festival located in Helsinki. The idea of *School* is that everyone has knowledge or skills that somebody else needs, and the purpose of *Koulu* is to assist in organizing the possibility to teach and learn. It provides the venues for classes, as well as publicity for the event. The two festivals arranged to date have included classes dealing with diverse subjects from constructing a solar cooker to the basics of flamenco to mathematics and Socratic dialogues.[505]

Even the *Restaurant Day*[506] that was initiated in Helsinki, but soon spread all over Finland and abroad, can be included in the group of new communal and creative practices. The idea of the *Restaurant Day* is to open a pop-up restaurant for one day and make and sell food to the

498 von Bonsdorff 2012, section 5.

499 von Bonsdorff 2012, section 5. Naukkarinen 2012, section 2.

500 Finnish Cultural Foundation website: "Taidetta hoitolaitoksiin," https://www.skr.fi/fi/taidetta-hoitolaitoksiin, accessed 4.11.2014.

501 von Bonsdorff 2012, section 5.

502 Daskalaki and Mould 2013, 7-12.

503 Daskalaki and Mould 2013, 2.

504 Wark 2013, 296-297. Fox 2012, 220.

505 Koulu in various websites: Demos Helsinki, http://www.demoshelsinki.fi/projektit/koulu-2012/, Koulu 2012 website, http://2012.kouluschool.org/in-english/, Koulu 2013 blog, http://kouluschool.wordpress.com/.

506 Restaurant Day website, http://www.restaurantday.org/en/.

customers, who have found the restaurant from the *Restaurant Day* website, or Facebook, or who just happen to show up. While the *maker movement* and *Koulu* concentrate on long term benefits to people's everyday lives, *Restaurant Day* has a more hedonistic nature. However, it brings forth individual creativity that is shared in a novel manner.

All of these practices and events include both professional and amateur participants, who are involved in these activities because they desire to do something with others, to share the products of their creativity as well as the skills needed, to basically find a community that shares the same interests. Some of these activities function in connection with activist movements trying to enhance traditional practices, or to raise public awareness of some injustice. These practices include, for instance, bicycle activism and guerrilla gardening, which promote alternative urban lifestyles.[507] However, the connecting layer in between these diverse practices is to promote new ways of doing things together and alternative approaches for good life.

A more traditionally art-like practice is street art, the practice of making painting and installations in public spaces without the proper permissions. Street art can be seen as contemporary outsider art, an unschooled artists' practice for channeling their creativity. Contemporary street art can take various forms, ranging from murals and graffiti to latter ones which can be executed in various materials, including knitting. Although most street art are paintings of at least two dimensional art, there are also sculptural works, as well as works employing new media. Unlike communal practices, street art plays consciously with the concept of art. The works of street art remind one of "real" artworks visually, but their institutional status is different. However, street art can form a bridge to art proper; the British artist using the alias Banksy became recognized for his political and humorous wall paintings, and was adopted into the artworld. In spite of the new status of his works, Banksy has continued working anonymously, presenting only his works. The person behind artworks tries to stay a mystery.[508]

The new cultural practices, such as the *maker movement* and *Restaurant Day* among others, situated in the intermediate field, can be very art-like, which can be seen as a threat to art proper, because they are easier to approach as art and because the new non-art/artified practices put art in a new kind of competitive situation.[509] In addition, the new non-art practices affect art proper by providing new models for artistic processes, approaching contemporary audiences and thus expand the area of art even further. The new models open a possibility for art to become a practice operating in a wider area than today's contemporary artistic practice, creating a new shift that will change art's substance. This kind of expansion would end the second system of art, which relies on art as a special practice operating in the limited field. However, I can see contemporary artistic practice continuing as a part of the new system, albeit as a less marginal part of the practice.

While the objective of modern sport is the achievement, getting better and testing one's abilities in competitions, the basis of contemporary hobbyist sport and physical practices seems quite different. Suit's characterization of sport, a voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles, covers both modern sport and contemporary post-sport physical activities. However, outlining the difference between the previous system of sport and the current arrangement is made easier by observing the physical practices through theoretical categorizations that concentrate on the reasons to undertake them. Timo Klemola has developed a four-category system that gives guidance on the evaluation of the ends of a physical practice. Klemola's system concentrates on the intent of an activity, which sets the essence of the activity. The possible intents, the orientations of an activity, are called projects in Klemola's system. These projects are: winning, health, expression, and the project regarding self. Modern competitive sport naturally belongs to the project of winning, and the project of health has been an inherent part of various physical traditions, including gymnastics and modern sport. Health forms an important reason for everyday exercises, but is less important in practices like skateboarding.[510] Klemola connects the project of expression to dance and similar physical practices, however I can see it as part of many practices where the aim is find new kind of contact with the environment. Many of the new sport related physical practices belong to this group. The last project, the project regarding self, is the most obscure. It is connected to the attempt to develop oneself as a human being, including even spiritual development, through physical exercises. Klemola associates it with yoga and other similar physical traditions, where the philosophical quest for self is explicit. The project of self is also applicable to Western sports as an implicit potential within them. In order to employ the project of self in western sports, the sport practice should take an orientation towards special/particular experiences that call for personal commitment. While contemporary sportified yoga practice can be just done for health, deep dedication to "extreme" sports can provide a platform for a project regarding the self, although it is possible to strive through less lethal undertakings.[511]

Henning Eichberg divides the relation of sport and body cultures into three different approaches: the hegemonic model is modern achievement sport, where the body movement is translated into records and the athletes are arranged into a sequence according to their achievements: the productive features of sport are dominating. The second model is found in contemporary fitness sports, where the measurable achievement is suppressed and a personal experience is the central

507 For instance: Critical Mass bicycling event : Social Issues Research Centre, http://www.sirc.org/articles/critical_mass.shtml, accessed 10.12.3013. Guerrilla Gardening: http://www.guerrillagardening.org/ or http://www.dodo.org/ryhmat/kaupunkiviljely, accessed 10.12.3013.

508 Adams 2009.

509 Sepänmaa 2012.

510 Borden 2001, 140, 214.

511 Klemola 1998 A, 143-144. About project regarding self, see for instance: Borden 2001, 125 and Mullen 2012.

aspect. The dominating feature is the felt body. The third model is related to the festive mode of movement, present in dance and play. Achievement and concentration on the self are replaced by the celebration of movement. John Bale has used a somewhat simplified version of Eichberg's division in the case of running and running cultures. He connects achievement and fitness running to the accumulation of cultural, social, and (possibly) financial capital, while running for fun is aproductive. However, Bale sees that these three approaches to running (or any other sport) are not mutually exclusive. They can exist together, but their importance and weight in an individual practice varies. [512]

The significance of these theoretical categorizations lies in the approach that brings forth the aspects of sport that are not emphasized in the current discussion about the meaning of sport. Sport is usually seen as a practice that produces national honor, individual success, and common health, but the categorizations by Eichberg, Klemola, and Bale show that there are many other dimensions to sport and other physical practices. The modern concept of sport narrows sport only to the physiological dimension, and reduces the possibilities for personal expression and feeling to next to nothing, but in the background there are alternative ways of practicing sport and physical activities. The perspective of modern sport can be paralleled to the museum conception of art, which Dewey criticized as confining art in museums instead of allowing it to flourish in all cultural practices. Sport does not need to be confined within the ideas of achievement and health. There are possibilities to emphasize the creative and the expressive possibilities in sport, as well as the possibility of personal development through sport. Like art proper, the modern idea of achievement sport will not disappear, but it will change; if the experienced achievement is underlined instead of the measurable achievement, sport would still fulfill the idea of a voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles.

Physical exercises are more popular today than ever before, and the variety of the practices is also greater than in earlier times. Current sport practice is frayed, so that the official form of sport is only a fraction of today's sport. Eichberg has listed more than ten unofficial variations of football. They all resemble the official version of the game, but are not concordant with it.[513] Many of the physical activities that formed the core of sport in the twentieth century have lost their popularity to new forms of physical activity, a change that has caused much distress in the field of sport. For instance, Finland has been very successful in track and field competitions since the early twentieth century, but now the only chance for higher ranking is in the javelin throw. The national sport organizations worry the current standard of Finnish sport, but do not value the success of sport at the hobbyist level. The future of Finnish distance running is worrying, as there are no new Paavo Nurmis or Lasse Viréns in sight, while simultaneously the enthusiasm for distance running as an everyman's hobby does not provoke any acclaim.[514]

512 Eichberg 1995 a, 10-12. Eichberg 2009, 89. Bale 2004, 9-10.

513 Eichberg 2010, 58-59.





It seems that competitive sport is turning into a profession and a marginal hobby, while the new kind of post-sport activities or novel adaptations of traditional sports are more attractive for the majority of people. The competitive approach in current hobbyist sports is different from competing in modern sport. In distance running, for example, competing is mostly testing the participant's own abilities, not competing against others, and participating in competitive marathons has other experiential dimensions in addition to the results of the competition.[515]

While the struggle against one's own abilities is in connection with the experiential mode of somaesthetics, the achievement in contemporary sports and exercise has taken novel forms that are linked to the representational and performative modes of somaesthetics: an important form of achievement is an outlook that reflects the athletic lifestyle. The demands set on the personal aesthetics are so central in the contemporary culture that various training programs have been developed for improving specific body parts. Moreover, if the training does not produce desired results, the body can be improved by cosmetic surgery, for instance using implants that imitate well-defined muscles.[516]

If the novel and popular physical practices are compared with modern sport, they emphasize more the experience and possibility for playful experimentation, as well as a communal attitude, instead of discipline and achievement inside predefined rules measured by the stopwatch or yardstick. The previous examples of skateboarding, snowboarding, and parkour conform to all these expectations, but they are also visible in contemporary adaptations of traditional sports. Distance running used to be a sport that required discipline and striving for achievement. Today's hobbyist practice of distance running has expanded by adopting different approaches to sport, in a similar manner as football has done through the various unofficial types of football found in Eichberg's investigation. The new approaches to running have transformed a part of the practice into something comparable to post-sports. However, distance running still calls for discipline, and the idea of achievement is present in the form of personal development; however, the central reason for contemporary running is the experience. Practicing distance running opens up experiences that are difficult to obtain otherwise in contemporary life. Committing to a simple practice that does not require exact timetables, special spaces, or complicated technology provides a contrast to the time sitting indoors and pushing buttons that

514 Anttila 2011.

515 While editing my text in the autumn 2014, Helsingin Sanomat newspaper reported that physical education curriculum in Finland will make a turn away from the ideals of modern sport. Instead of concentrating on sports only the pupils will be introduced alternative physical practices in order to transform physical education from sport oriented practice to one that emphasizes the delight of physical activity and encourages to an active life-style. Kylmänen 2014 a and 2014 b.

516 Kinnunen 2008, 141-143, 212-213, 216, 205.

comprises much of our daily life. The tiny difference between competitive sport and contemporary sport practice shows the effect of the inclination towards experience; while elite athletes seldom continue their sport after their competition career is over, hobbyist runners continue in spite of their declining results.[517]

The experimentation inside running practice becomes visible in various ways, however the playfulness of the experimentation is more or less implicit; experimentation can become visible in extending the running distances from jogging around the neighborhood to doing marathons and beyond, and alternative experiments can take the form of combining traveling and running, for instance running marathons in various travel destinations,[518] or focus on refining ones running style, for instance the search for a natural running style through barefoot running. The play element is hidden in the attitude of the experiments; they are not done only for efficiency's sake, but to increase the enjoyment of running, or just for variety. The communal side of contemporary running demonstrates this more clearly; when the other runners are no longer regarded as competitors, they become companions. Running a marathon is a communal experience, the only real competitor is oneself, and the other runners are partners who share the experience of this particular marathon. Even though running is a solitary activity while training, the experience can be shared in running events, and additionally through social media, discussion forums, Facebook, and various social applications[519].

Modern sport restricted the environment of sport to artificial, specially constructed spaces, where the dimensions of the track or field were carefully defined in order to provide equal opportunity to win. The post-sports have a more relaxed relationship with the environment, which is visible in the curiosity to try new kinds of surroundings for the practice. One part of the post-sports also has an additional element in its relation to the environment. The athletes involved in practices that require large open spaces or mountains, generally a wilderness, often cite the experience of the nature as an important part of their practice. The descriptions of their encounters with the wilderness often refer to an experience of the sublime, similar to the landscape tourists during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. [520]

Today, the development of physical practices takes place in the field of post-sports. The development of the core areas of modern sport is saturated. The changes in traditional sport are a minuscule reformulating of the rules in order to attract audiences, or to make the event more suitable for television, or to improve the participant's safety. Examples can be found on many occasions: in the European Cup of track and field an elimination rule was added to the steeplechase race in order to make the competition more exiting and thus more attractive for the audience.[521] Cross country skiing has been developed into a sprint event, where all the action is instant and visible to the audience, unlike in traditional cross country skiing where the participants spend most of their time en route through the forest and the results are timed, instead of a struggle at the finish line. Safety has been advanced, for instance, in boxing, where head guards became mandatory in the 1980s. In addition to the refinement of old sports, new competitive sport events are developed purposefully, often with commercial success and spectacle in mind: downhill skating, hosted today by the energy drink brand Red Bull, is one of these novelties that tries to exceed the magnitude of previous sport spectacles.[522]

While there are fixed actions in the post-sports, for instance the standard moves in skateboarding (ollie, various grips and slides), and standard spaces for the activity in both skateboarding and snowboarding (half and quarter pipes, rails and various elements in skate and board parks), these do not confine further exploration of the practice. The core of streetstyle skateboarding is the search for new ways of contacting the environment – producing the world by physical activity[523] as Iain Borden describes it. Snowboarders explore new environments too, and during recent years urban snowboarding has become a trend. Even though there are no large rideable hills in urban areas, there are plenty of walls, bridges, stairs, and handrails that can be utilized for snowboarding stunts.[524] It is not only the use of environmental possibilities that evolves; the actual physical activity also develops. The early tricks wear out and the new ones become more fashionable. Rodney Mullen speaks about the contextual creativity in skateboarding, referring to the connection between new environments and novel ways to use your skateboard. The personal contextual creativity remodels the practice, and makes it possible to mold the practice according to one's identity. This is seen as a normal part of practices like skateboarding. In traditional sports, the situation is the opposite; introducing new moves is much more difficult. For instance, events like gymnastics and figure skating restrict the creativity of the participants. In addition, the creativity in new physical practices has a special feature which is also found in the art-like creative practices with rhizomatic structure. The new creations, the new ways to do things, are shared with the community, and the quality of contribution earns one respect from the others involved in the practice.[525]

Both art and sport have been used for creating cultural distinctions, however the mechanism of making the difference has changed. The interest in art that formed a novel way of making social distinctions in nineteenth century culture focused on the consumption of cultural products. The consumption of sport also concentrated on spectatorship for most of the twentieth century. In contemporary culture, being a member of the audience does not

517 Murakami 2008, 173-174. Roos 1995, chapter 19.

518 Roos 1995, chapter 6.

519 In 2013, for instance *Sports Tracker*, *Endomondo,* and *HeiaHeia* are popular sports tracking applications.

520 Bale 2004, 40. Borden 2001, 191. Klockars 2010. Hoffmann 2007.

521 European Athletics 2009.

522 See: Red Bull Crashed Ice. http://www.redbullcrashedice.com

523 Borden 2001, 9.

524 For instance: Radshot (blog) , http://www.radshot.com.

525 Mullen 2012.

suffice for social distinction: it emphasizes participation as the expressive order. This active engagement into processes that produce aesthetic experiences connects today's artistic and physical practices with the production of cultural distinction.

The current practices within both art and sport show a greater similarity than before, especially in their border areas. There seems to be a couple of reasons for this: the current postmodern stage of culture endorses the novel combinations of cultural practices. The logic is that these combinations benefit the operation of the practices. For instance, in the case of artification, art is seen to bring a new kind of creativity into business operations, and including artistic activity in a business environment provides new work opportunities for artists as well as a novel platform to develop art projects.[526] In sport, there is no similar active tendency to use sport to benefit other practices, but the manner in which sport has become an integral part of contemporary lifestyle brings it in contact with all kinds of cultural practices. Secondly, the praxis of combining, linking together diverse cultural practices, has lowered the boundaries between them and generated a new field of art-like and sport-like activities in the margins of the established (modern) practices. Many of these new activities are organized as a rhizome as they do not have clear centers or appointed representatives. The boundaries between practices have become so porous that is often difficult to determine which activities are art proper or real sport. Finding the correct definition is however not necessary; the conception will change according to the context and one's personal point of view. Furthermore, the field of new activities is neither stable nor coherent; there are gaps between practices, leaks from one practice to another, as well as various ambiguities concerning the positions of the practices. A similar activity can be placed on either side of a boundary, and be seen as strengthening the prevalent practice (of art or sport) or as disrupting it as an alien influence. Thirdly, the views about art and sport as cultural practices have suffered from the narcistic perception of their history; their development and cultural position have been treated without a real consideration of the assimilation between various practices, and without a wider view of the development of European culture, not to mention global circumstances. This narrow view has enabled the perception of both art and sport as eternal practices, as old as human culture, even though their modern forms emerged in concert with modern society, and their current forms are postmodern developments of the early modern ones and still in flux. Understanding the wider context of the emergence and development of art and sport exposes their resemblance in historical perspective.

The expanding notion of art and sport does not propose that the modern understanding of these practices is totally outdated, but that it is not extensive enough to encompass the current situation. Today's idea of art incorporates a wider variety of practices than the modern one, and in addition there are various activities that are art from one perspective and just art-like from another. The people involved in the practices often do not think about the difference between art and non-art. Similarly, today's sport includes a broader range of physical practices, and especially attitudes towards these activities, than the modern sport of the twentieth century. Some practices stay clearly outside sport ideology and organization, and some would like to be acknowledged as sports, while others do not really care. In both art and sport, there is so much activity on the fringes that their edges are fraying. The art and sport of tomorrow will be different from today's ideas, but they will carry traces of yesterday's conceptions.

526 Naukkarinen 2012. Pilvi Takala artwork *The Trainee* (2008) for financial concultation company Deloitte. http://www.pilvitakala.com/thetrainee01.html, accessed 14.12.2013.







# The Final Stretch

The observation of art and sport as systems and categories has made it possible to see their novelty in modern culture, even though there have been individual practices that are reminiscent of artistic practices or sport events and games. In addition, the concentration on the structural level of art and sport reveals how the practices have been transforming within their modern systems during the twentieth century. The change has taken place to such a degree that it is possible to claim that both art and sport have moved forward from the starting point of their modern systems.

When aesthetics is understood as sensuous knowing, the aesthetic experience forms the basis of our contact with the world. When art is understood according to John Dewey's aesthetics, it is not confined to operate within certain practices, but connected with the greatest aesthetic experiences. These two points of view make it plausible to connect art and sport through aesthetic experience. Even though there is no reason to directly link art and sport, emphasizing artistic features in sport will provide new perspectives on sport.

Artification builds one more bridge between art and sport. The use of artistic features in sport can be coincidental, taking place through a general cultural change, or it can be advanced purposefully. In either case, artification promotes new ways of enjoying sport. Sport can be made meaningful through a creative attitude and personal adaptations of sport, not only through the ideals of achievement and the quest for records.

Sport has appeared as a subject of art since the beginnings of the practice. Today, sport is employed by art in various ways. In addition to simply presenting sport in images, or commenting on sport-related issues, contemporary art utilizes sport to refer to other subjects, in the role of a go-between as well as a personal artistic tool. However, using sport in art is still a minor trend.

Various intertwined features of today's art and sport separate contemporary practices from the previous, modern conception of them. The importance of the art object has declined; instead, the artistic processes and produced experiences have drawn nearer to the center. The central concepts of modern sport, achievement and records, have been remodeled: in today's recreational sport

ones rival is no longer another participant, but oneself. Today's recreational athlete competes – if she feels the need – against her own results, not the other participants. Both art and sport have moved towards everyday experiences. In the field of art, this is visible in both the artworks and the artistic processes: artworks do not necessarily differ from everyday objects, and artistic work can assume forms that benefit other fields of life outside the artworld. In both cases, the institutional settings still separate art from other practices.

The shift towards the everyday in sport has a different form: the expansion of sport has taken place in recreational sports, where the physical activity is in close contact with people's everyday life. The spectacle in competitive sport has become larger and more detached from the everyday; however, it represents just a fraction of contemporary physical activities. The new sport-related physical activities, alternative or post-sports, do not necessarily consider sport to be an attractive paradigm, and voluntarily stand apart from its objectives and values. Another aspect separating today's art and sport from their modern precursors is the growing significance of participation. However, the mechanisms of participation diverge. In art, the participation is conducted, at least in some degree, by the artists; sometimes it is carefully instructed, sometimes the instructions open a sphere of activity for the participants to play in. Participation in sport is related to the grass-roots level of recreational sport, where all the people involved are participants, and in alternative sports, where the borderline between the "real athletes" and the others is significantly lower than in modern sports.

While this change is visible in the actual practices, it is more apparent on the fringes of the practices: in creative art-like practices and alternative approaches to physical activity. These activities borrow features from the primary practices, but adapt them, and accommodate them to their own ends that deviate from the ideals of the contemporary practices of art and sport. Often the event of doing things together, the experience of communal activity, overpowers the other goals of the practice.

The three art projects included in the research enabled the generation of alternative views on sport, and formulating nonverbal questions and claims about both sport and art. Already in the early phase of the research, I found that it was not the finished artworks that were really relevant to this objective, but rather the routes I





took in making them. The artworks could reveal some aspects of sport (or art) I have not realized before, but when the process of making the artworks is finished their importance to me, as well as to the research, is exhausted. The role of art seems to be somewhat paradoxical: the artistic work was carried out for my sake and for the sake of advancing the research, whereas the artworks themselves were for the audience.

The most significant part of the artistic process has been the thinking, planning and execution of the artworks. This process provided me with a different perspective on the subject of my research. I was not confined by the boundaries of academic thinking, which sometimes set limits on fresh associations and ideas. If the academic work resembled a steady climb towards the summit, the artistic work was the daring leap of a freeclimber in the direction of the next grip or footing. The preceding theoretical work provided the first footing, and gave some direction to the work, but when the artistic process was started it became quite independent. Regardless of the independence of the artistic work, however, it cannot take a random direction, as the goals of the artistic and the academic work are the same.

While art and sport have been related through their connection in the emergence of modern European culture, currently there are even more reasons to see them as parallel practices. Today, the autonomy of cultural spheres, including art and sport, has weakened. Instead of being self-contained practices, they continue their existence in flux. The understanding about art and sport is based on a constantly moving point of view. It is impossible to obtain a complete understanding of them; in all perspectives there are always gaps, leaks, and ambiguities. The new and ambiguous construction of these practices, and their frayed borderlines, makes possible a new area of activity where art-like and sport-related activities can flourish. This is the sphere where the fresh connections between art and sport, as well as other cultural practices, can arise.

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# Abstract

This research maps the relationships between art and sport through various perspectives using a multidisciplinary approach. In addition, three artistic projects have been included in the research. The research produces a reasoned proposition why art and sport should be seen similar practices in contemporary culture and why this perspective is beneficial.

In everyday view art and sport seem opposite cultural practices, but by adopting an appropriate view similarities can be detected. In order to eliminate these superficial differences the research examines art and sport as cultural practices. The cultural practices of art and sport are analyzed from various points of view including cultural history, social structure and philosophical aesthetics. The special focus is on artist's and athlete's viewpoints to the practices. The artistic projects provide an additional perspective to the relationship of art and sport.

When cultural practices are examined from today's point of view, our current understanding of them has an effect on our view of their historical forms and they appear existing in a similar form and carrying similar concepts through history. However, a closer look exposes that most cultural practices, including art and sport as we understand them, have not existed as distinct realms before the emergence of modern European culture.

Employing the idea of the historical formation of cultural practices, the development of art and sport towards their current forms is traced. Historical practices, where the end-results have resembled artworks or athletic performances, have existed, but that at the level of practices they have been noticeably different form modern concepts of art and sport. Also the meanings these practices carried were different from modern art and sport. The practices of art and sport organized into their modern forms between the early eighteenth century and the end of the nineteenth century. The central concepts of art and sport: artist and athlete, work of art and regulated and fair competition, the key concepts of aesthetics as well as comparable records found their current meanings over that time. Our contemporary understanding of art and sport is based on this development, even though further change has taken place, especially during the latter half of the twentieth century.



The similarities in the social structure of art and sport practices are examined. Both practices have a special place within modern culture: they have formed their own systems, semi-independent worlds, inside the modern culture. These worlds have established their own internal rules that are not perfectly accordant with the rules of ordinary life. Furthermore, the division into the protagonists, artists and athletes, and the audience who follows the action as well as the rituals that emphasize the roles connects art and sport practices.

The aesthetic link between art and sport is established two ways. Firstly, they are connected by the concept of aesthetic experience and secondly, the contemporary understanding of aesthetics as the sensuous knowing instead of the philosophy of art of makes possible to apply aesthetic consideration all kinds of phenomena. The key ideas about the aesthetics and its relevance in sport are outlined and the recent arguments about the relationship of sport and art within the field of aesthetics are analyzed. In addition, prospects of artification in sport are explored.

The art projects that form a part of the research continue the established tradition of artistic research by exploring and commenting on the subject of the study using artistic methods. In my study, the works of art had lesser importance for the study, whereas the artistic work preceding the public exhibitions provided possibilities to ruminate the relationship between art and sport without the burden of academic rigor as the artistic work has different criteria for quality. In addition to the artistic work, I employed my hobbyist distance running practice for providing understanding about athletic experiences.

After the exploration of links between art and sport, their current relationship is analyzed. Various intertwined features of today's art and sport separate the understanding of the contemporary practices from the previous, modern conception of them. The importance of the art object has declined; instead the artistic processes and produced experiences have drawn nearer the center. The central concepts of the competitive sport, achievement and record, have been remodeled: in today's recreational sport the rival is no more another participant, but oneself. Today's recreational athlete competes – if she feels for it – against her own results, not the other participants.

Furthermore, both art and sport have moved towards everyday experiences. In the field of art, this is visible in both the artworks and the artistic processes: artworks do not necessarily differ from

everyday objects and the artistic work can take forms that benefit other fields of life outside the artworld. The shift towards everyday in sport has a different form: the recent expansion of sport has taken place in the recreational sport in close contact with people's everyday life.

Additional aspect separating today's art and sport from their modern precursors is the growing significance of participation. However, the mechanisms of participation diverge. In art, the participation is conducted, at least in some degree, by the artists; sometimes it is carefully instructed, and sometimes the instructions open a sphere of activity for participants to play. The participation in sport is related to the grass-root level of recreational sport where all the people involved are participants and in alternative sports where the borderline between the "real athletes" and the others is significantly lower than in modern competitive sports.

While these changes are somewhat visible in the actual practices of art and sport, they are more apparent in the fringes of the practices: on the creative art-like practices and alternative approaches to the physical activity. These activities borrow features from the primary practices, but adapt them, accommodate them for their own ends that deviate from the ideals present in the contemporary practices of art and sport.

The recent transformation of both practices has lead into a situation where there are wider ties between art and sport than before. Even though similarities between art and sport have existed since the emergence of their modern forms, the recent development of art and sport has generated a situation where there are more compelling reasons to see their connections and promote adopting new perspectives to them. The current cultural atmosphere promotes the cross-fertilization of cultural practices as well as utilization of the new perspectives for benefit the further development of practices into novel areas. The ambiguous construction of today's practices as well as their frayed borderlines creates a new area of activity where art-like and sport-related activities can flourish. This is the sphere where the fresh connections between art and sport, as well as other cultural practices, can arise.

# Abstrakti

Tutkimus kartoittaa taiteen ja urheilun yhteyksiä useista näkökulmista käyttäen monitieteistä lähestymistapaa. Perinteisen tutkimusosuuden lisäksi siihen liittyy kolme taideprojektia. Tutkimuksen tuloksena esitetään perusteltu näkemys taiteen ja urheilun samankaltaisesta roolista nykykulttuurissa sekä syitä tämän näkemyksen etuihin.

Arkisessa katsannossa taide ja kulttuuri näyttävät toisilleen vastakkaisilta kulttuurisilta käytännöiltä, mutta valitsemalla sopiva näkökulma voidaan taiteen ja urheilun yhtenäisyyksiä tarkastella. Pinnallisten erilaisuuksien eliminoimiseksi taidetta ja urheilua tarkastellaan tutkimuksessa kulttuuristen käytäntöjen tasolla. Taiteen ja urheilun käytäntöjä tarkastellaan monesta suunnasta mm. kulttuurihistorian, sosiaalisen rakenteen ja estetiikan tarjoamien näkökulmien kautta. Erityisen tarkastelun kohteena on taiteilijan ja urheilijan subjektiivinen näkökulma taiteen ja urheilun käytäntöihin. Taideprojektit tarjoavat vielä uudenlaisen näkökulman taiteen ja urheilun suhteeseen.

Kun kulttuurisia käytäntöjä tai järjestelmiä tarkastellaan tämän päivän näkökulmasta nykyinen käsityksemme niistä vaikuttaa käsitykseemme niiden historiallisesta olemuksesta, jolloin käytännöt näyttävät esiintyvän samankaltaisina ja kantavan samankaltaisia merkityksiä kautta historian. Tarkempi selvitys osoittaa, että nykyiset kulttuuriset käytännöt, meidän käsityksemme mukaiset taide ja urheilu mukaan lukien, ovat löytäneet muotonsa vasta modernin eurooppalaisen kulttuurin kehityksen myötä.

Tutkimuksen perusta luodaan soveltamalla kulttuurisen käytännön käsitettä taiteen ja urheilun historialliseen kehitykseen kohti niiden nykyaikaista olomuotoa. Historiallinen analyysi näyttää, että on ollut varhaisia käytäntöjä, joiden tulokset ovat muistuttaneet taideteoksia tai urheilusuorituksia, mutta jotka käytäntöjen ja järjestelmien tasolla ovat poikenneet huomattavasti meidän taide- ja urheilukäsityksistämme. Myös käytäntöihin liitetyt merkitykset ovat poikenneet nykyisistä taiteeseen ja urheiluun liitetyistä merkityksistä. Taiteen ja urheilun nykyiset käytännöt saivat muotonsa modernin eurooppalaisen kulttuurin hahmottuessa. Taide ja sen keskeiset käsitteet: idea erillisestä taideteoksesta sekä erityisestä, käsityöläisestä poikkeavasta, taiteilijasta, estetiikan ja taidekritiikin avainkäsitteet muotoutuivat ja vakiintuivat 1700-luvun alusta 1800-luvun puoleenväliin kestäneen jakson aikana. Samaan aikaan sijoittuu myös urheilun keskeisten käytäntöjen synty: vakiintuneet säännöt, tarkasti määritellyt kilpailut, käsitykset reilusta kilpailusta ja ennätyksistä sekä urheiluareenat ja urheilun tukijärjestelmät saivat muotonsa 1800-luvun loppuun mennessä. Meidän käsityksemme taiteesta ja urheilusta perustuu tähän kehitykseen, vaikka molemmat käytännöt ovat muuttuneet noista ajoista, erityisesti 1900-luvun loppupuolella.

Historiallisten yhtymäkohtien lisäksi taiteen ja urheilun sosiaalinen rakenne on samankaltainen: molemmat järjestelmät muodostavat oman, osittain itsenäisen, maailmansa muun kulttuurin sisällä. Taiteen ja urheilun maailmoissa on kehittynyt oma sisäinen säännöstö, joka ei ole yhteneväinen arkielämää ohjaavien sääntöjen kanssa. Tämän lisäksi käytäntöjä yhdistää samanlainen roolijako: toiminnan keskiössä ovat taiteilijat ja urheilijat, joiden teoksia ja esityksiä yleisö seuraa. Taiteen ja urheilun sisäiset käytännöt ja rituaalit vahvistavat tätä jakoa.

Esteettinen linkki taiteen ja urheilun välille löytyy kahdesta suunnasta. Ensinnäkin olen yhdistänyt ne esteettisen kokemuksen käsitettä käyttäen ja toiseksi nykyinen käsitys estetiikasta yleensä aistimelliseen havaitsemiseen liittyvänä tutkimustraditiona puhtaan taidefilosofian sijasta mahdollistaa esteettisen ajattelun kohdistamisen kaikenlaisille elämänalueille. Lisäksi tarkastelen urheilun estetiikan keskeisiä kysymyksiä, kuten myös viimeaikaisia ajatuksia yhteyksistä taiteen ja urheilun välillä.

Tutkimukseen liittyvät taideprojektit liittyvät jo vakiintuneeseen taiteellisen tutkimuksen traditioon, tarkastelemalla ja kommentoimalla tutkimuksen aihetta taiteen keinoin. Varsinaisten taideteosten merkitys tutkimukselle on pieni, taideprojektien merkitys tutkimukselle on tullut projektien julkista esittämistä edeltävästä taiteellisesta työstä ja sen tarjoamasta mahdollisuudesta pohtia taiteen ja urheilun yhteyksiä ilman akateemiselle tutkimukselle ominaista kurinalaisuutta seuraten taiteellisen työn toisenlaisia laatuvaatimuksia. Taiteellisen työn lisäksi olen käyttänyt kestävyysjuoksuharrastustani apuna urheilukokemusten luonteen jäsentämiseen.

Taidetta ja urheilua yhdistävien linkkien analyysin jälkeen, niiden nykyistä suhdetta tarkastellaan. Useat toisiinsa kietoutuneet muutokset erottavat nykyisen näkemyksen taiteesta ja urheilusta aikaisemmasta leimallisen modernista käsityksestä. Tämän päivän

taiteessa fyysinen taideteos ei ole samalla tavalla merkityksellinen kuin muutama vuosikymmen sitten. Taiteen painopiste on siirtynyt esineiden tuottamisesta taiteellisiin prosesseihin ja niiden tuottamiin kokemuksiin. Myös urheilu on muuttunut: aiemmin kilpailukeskeisen urheilun keskeiset käsitteet, mitattavat saavutukset ja kirjattavat ennätykset, ovat saaneet uuden muodon. Nykyinen valtavirran harrastajaurheilija on kiinnostunut enemmän kilpailusta itsensä kanssa, omien ennätystensä rikkomisesta kuin kanssaurheilijan voittamisesta.

Lisäksi, sekä taide että urheilu ovat siirtyneet lähemmäksi arjen kokemuksia. Taiteessa tämä on näkyvissä sekä taideteoksissa että taiteellisissa prosesseissa: taideteokset eivät välttämättä poikkea arkiesineistä ja taiteellinen työ on etsinyt muotoja, joissa toiminta tapahtuu taiteen ulkopuolisessa maailmassa. Urheilun siirtymä kohti arkea on tapahtunut hieman erilaisessa muodossa: urheilun kentän laajeneminen on tapahtunut kilpaurheilun ulkopuolisella vapaa-ajan liikunnan alueella, jolloin urheilun painopiste on siirtynyt kilpakentiltä lähemmäs arkielämää.

Myös osallistumisen painottaminen erottaa tämän päivän taiteen ja urheilun niiden alkuperäisistä käytännöistä. Tässäkin taiteen ja urheilun muutokset poikkeavat hieman toisistaan. Taiteessa yleisön osallistuminen on useimmiten riippuvaista taiteen ammattilaisen valinnoista. Toisinaan yleisön osallistumien teokseen on hyvinkin ohjattua ja toisinaan teos muodostaa kokeilulle avoimen pelikentän. Urheilussa osallistuminen tapahtuu pääosin ruohonjuuritason harrasteurheilun kautta, jolloin kukaan osallistujista ei ole ammattilainen. Lisäksi monissa uusissa nuorisokulttuurin liepeillä syntyneissä urheilulajeissa raja “oikeiden urheilijoiden” ja harrastajien välillä on huomattavasti vähäisempi kuin perinteisessä kilpaurheilussa.

Muutos urheilun ja taiteen käytännöissä on jossain määrin näkyvissä vakiintuneiden käytäntöjen sisällä, mutta suurimmat muutokset tapahtuvat käytäntöjen raja-alueilla: taidetta lähestyvissä luovissa käytännöissä ja vaihtoehtoisissa ruumiillisissa aktiviteeteissa. Nämä raja-alueiden käytännöt lainaavat piirteitä vakiintuneilta taiteen ja urheilun käytännöiltä ja muokkaavat niitä omien päämääriensä käyttöön.

Viimeaikainen kehitys taiteen ja urheilun käytännöissä on johtanut tilanteeseen, jossa yhteydet ja kohtaamisen mahdollisuudet taiteen ja urheilun välillä ovat suuremmat kuin aikaisemmin. Vaikka yhteyksiä voidaan löytää taiteen ja urheilun historiallisesta kehityksestä, viimeaikainen kehitys on johtanut tilanteeseen, jossa syyt luoda uusia yhteyksiä taiteen ja urheilun välille ovat painavammat kuin aikaisemmin. Nykykulttuuri suosii toisistaan poikkeavien kulttuuristen käytäntöjen sekoittamista ja kannustaa hyödyntämään uusien yhdistelmien avaamia näkökulmia alkuperäisten käytäntöjen kehittämiseen. Aikaisemmin selkeärajaiset taiteen ja urheilun käytännöt ovat nyt jatkuvassa liikkeessä. Kulttuuristen käytäntöjen uusi ja monitulkintainen tilanne epäselviksi muuttuneine rajoineen luo uuden aktiivisen kentän, missä taiteen kaltaiset ja urheilusta johdetut uudet aktiviteetit voivat kehittyä.